

JANUARY 1988

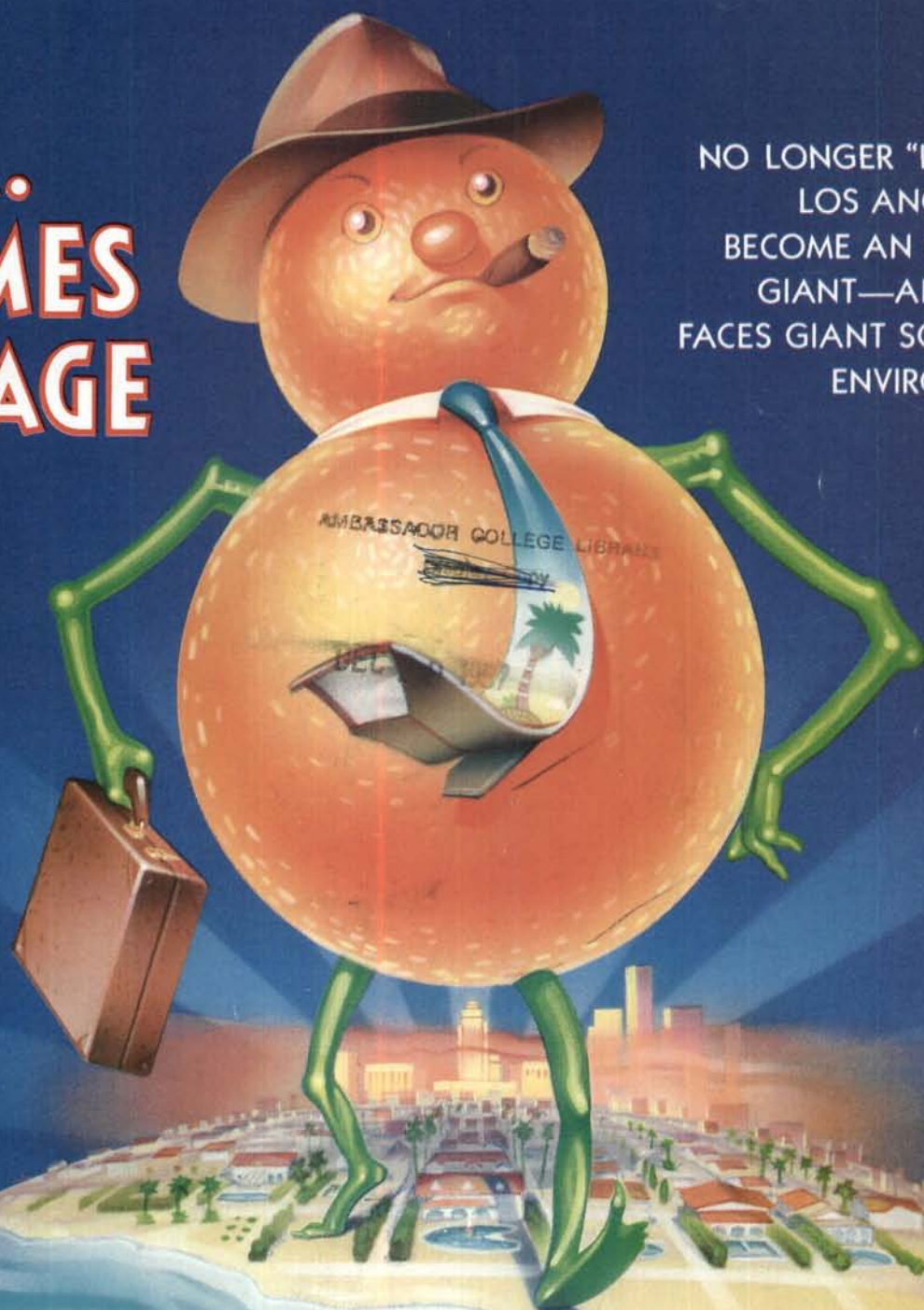
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The Atlantic

FICTION BY JOHN HERSEY / KATIE LEISHMAN ON AIDS AND SYPHILIS

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OF AGE**

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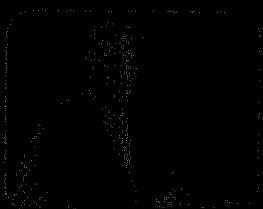
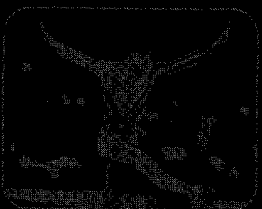
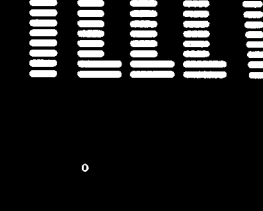
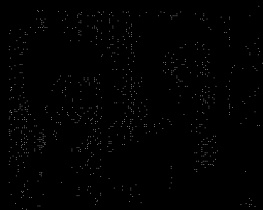
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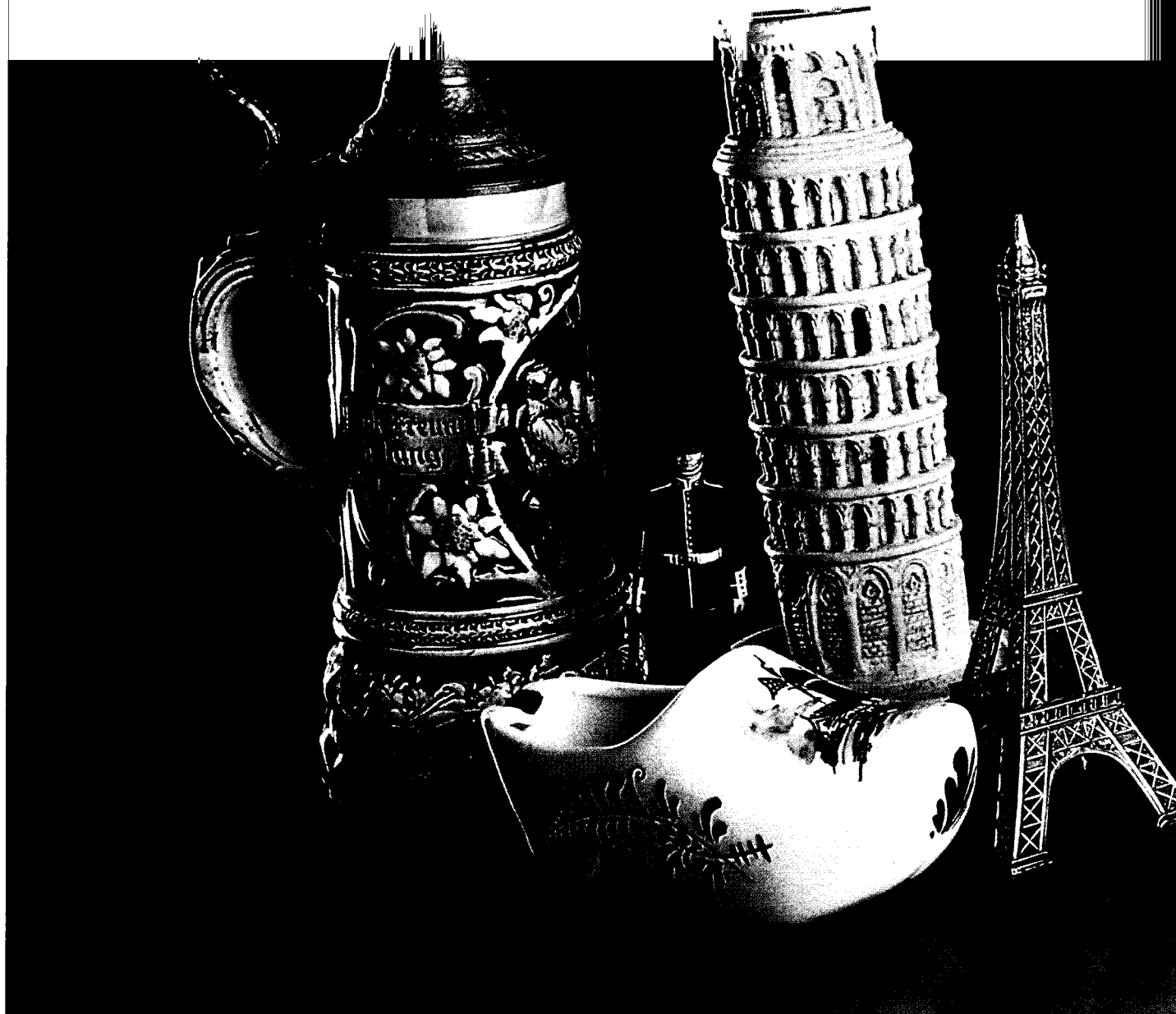
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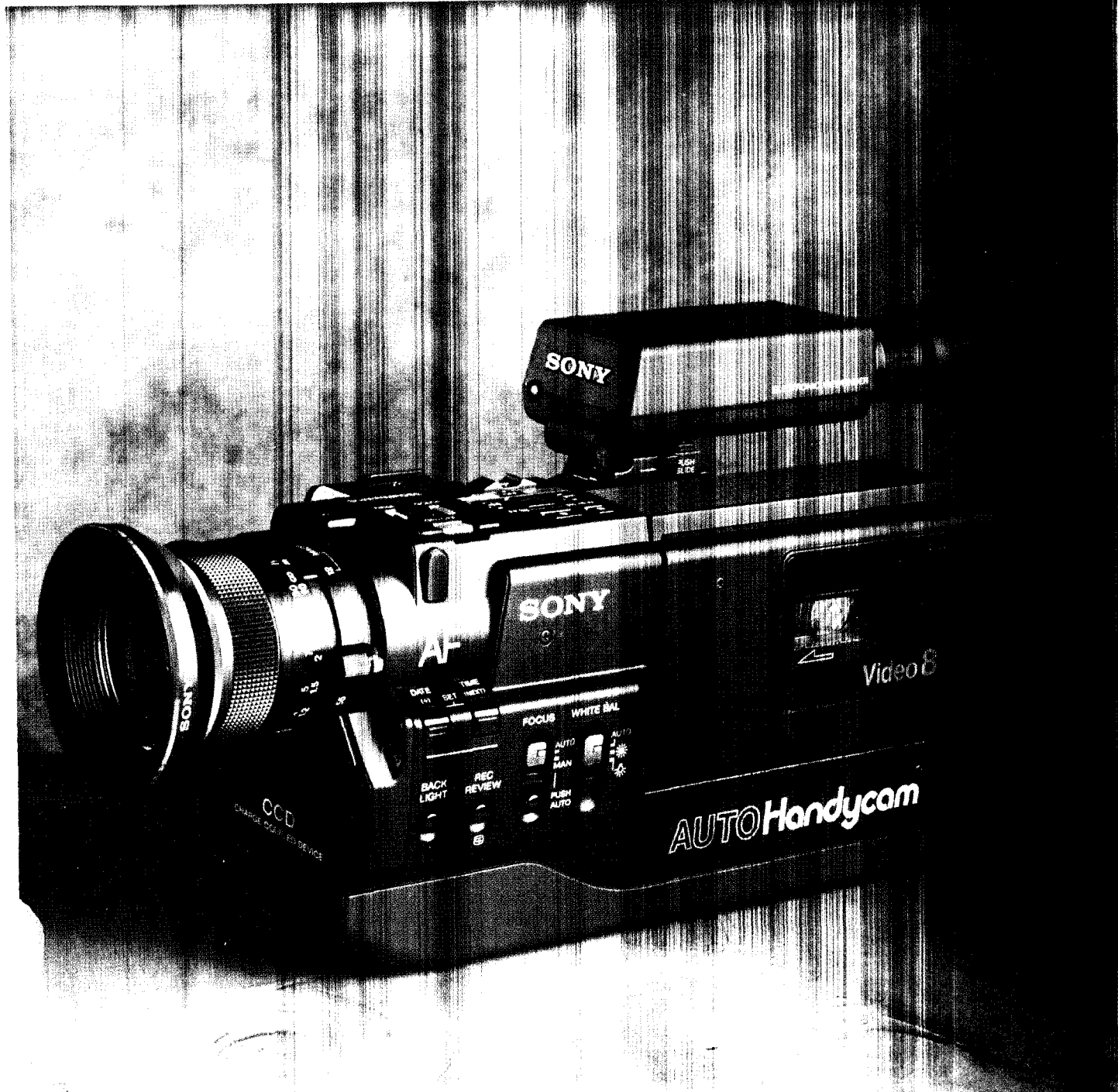
cathedrals were in Germany.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE MORNING AFTER

Peter G. Peterson, in "The Morning After" (October *Atlantic*), says, "Reagan promised . . . and gave us instead. . . ." Reagan did not give us anything. The real villains are Congress and the American public.

Congress, by refusing to curb spending, has escalated the deficit problem. While pointing to defense spending with one hand, Congress outlines national health programs and farm subsidies with the other. Congress does, of course, pass a toothless spending-cut bill every now and then, but until it is held much more accountable for spending, there will be no respite in this amazing sell-out of the public.

The American public, with more disposable income and a *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* mind set, chose to spend, rather than invest, during the early 1980s. This caused a flood of imports and the rise of trade imbalances. Two imported cars in the garage and a VCR under every TV—that is the American dream. Considering the example before them, how could today's children be expected to do any better tomorrow?

STEVEN R. HELMREICH
Houghton, Mich.

ties. One can just as easily argue that these historically high levels were a luxury we can no longer afford. Even if high spending was, indeed, necessary back then, changes since in the relative economic strengths within our alliances suggest that now we should spend less and let others take up the slack. The current Administration's lack of interest in this idea is attributable to its use of defense spending to reward political support and campaign contributions. How else does one explain the Administration's infatuation with big-ticket items that are redundant (two new strategic bombers and land-based ICBMs), obsolete (refitted battleships and giant aircraft carriers), or simply impractical (the Strategic Defense Initiative)? Defense spending affects the budget deficit, the national debt, and, by diverting engineering talent, the trade deficit as well. Ignoring does not help solve the problem.

RICHARD MAREN
Seattle, Wash.

A sure way to level out our wild consumerism would be to require a 22 stamp on every piece of the mail that jams my mailbox.

MARJORIE MASTERSO
Huntsville, Ala.

Peter Peterson ignored one important fact: the Social Security system will have a revenue "bulge" during the next twenty-five years. This will result in a reduction of the capital flow needed to maintain our life-styles and will discourage efforts to raise taxes.

Peterson did not mention the regressive nature of President Reagan's economic policies, and urges another regressive tax increase (the gas tax). He states that cutting marginal tax rates resulted in greater tax income from the wealthy. The fact is that tax-income increases resulted from disproportionate income increases and loophole reductions among the wealthy.

JAMES VAN HOF
North Providence, R.I.

Peter Peterson cites the problems resulting from the relatively low rate of private savings in the United States. He fails, however, to suggest any method of stimulating increased savings on the part of Americans.

Since it is so important for the U.S. government and U.S. industry to reduce their reliance on foreign capital, it seems obvious that net private savings must increase dramatically. It seems equally obvious that Americans are not likely voluntarily to increase savings in a substantial way. The solution, as I see it, is to establish a mandated individual retirement account for every American worker. Such a program would be designed to serve equally the interests of individual American workers and the economic stability of the United States.

Here's how it would work: every American worker would be compelled to open an individual retirement account at a federally approved financial institution.

tion. A minimum percentage of each paycheck would be deducted automatically and deposited in the IRA, to which neither the worker nor anyone else—including the IRS—would have access. From this account would come the worker's guaranteed retirement income, which, depending upon his proximity to retirement at the start of the program, would supplement or replace his Social Security benefit. Social Security benefits to those who retired within the first two years of the program would not be affected, but workers who had participated in the program for two years or longer prior to retirement would have their Social Security payments reduced accordingly. Eventually no new Social Security benefits would be paid, because retiring workers would have sufficient funds in their retirement accounts to support them through retirement.

Of course, workers could not be allowed to withdraw all their money at retirement. Instead, they would receive monthly payments large enough to support them comfortably without depleting their funds prematurely. This system would provide an enormous pool of savings for U.S. banks to loan here and abroad, and a sensible retirement income for American workers.

CHRISTOPHER B. OWEN
Tulsa, Okla.

As an accountant, I share Peter Peterson's dismay over the 1986 tax law. The goal of any government should be to encourage individual saving and the modernization of industry through the acquisition of capital goods. Why, then, did the 1986 law take away (for all practical purposes) the deduction for individual retirement accounts and repeal the investment tax credit? Had these two items been retained, they might have blunted the effects of what Peterson has called "vicious-circle economics."

EDWARD A. FADDEN
Alpharetta, Ga.

OLIAGE TOURS

I was skimming your October Almanac and was very surprised to read, under "Environment," that "brilliant reds and oranges occur only in eastern North America and a few areas of eastern Asia." Have you never seen the stands of aspen in the Rocky Mountains or the Lake Superior region, which are sometimes red and orange as well as yellow?

It seems you have also forgotten all the sugar maples in the northern Midwest, from Minnesota to Ohio.

ROBERT DORENFELD
Lexington, Va.

Yes, the east coast of the United States is ablaze with color in the autumn. Even so, your editors' limited attribution of brilliant reds and oranges to "only in eastern North America" suggests a need to stand in awe of a Missouri Ozarks flaming maple.

GUY ROARK
Waynesville, Mo.

Messrs. Dorenfeld and Roark apparently assume that by "eastern North America" we solipsistically meant "the Northeast" rather than "eastern North America," of which Missouri and Minnesota are clearly a part. That aspens can turn any color other than brown or yellow was news to us, as it was to forestry professors in Wisconsin, Montana, Minnesota, and New Mexico.

THE EDITORS

ELECTRONICALLY YOURS

Gerald Jonas propagates misuse of the term *baud* ("Electronically Yours," October *Atlantic*). There are two units in electrical engineering that pertain to data communications: baud and bit/second. The latter is a straightforward unit from the user's point of view—a transfer rate. But the former is dependent on implementation and is seldom known by, or significant to, the user. A baud is a rate of symbol transfer across a communications channel. In the context of Jonas's poem, the channel is a telephone line and the symbols are brief tones at different frequencies which convey the content.

A symbol may define one, two, or many bits; thus one cannot say categorically that the units baud and bit/second are equivalent unless one knows the design of the system. It so happens that the usual 300 bits/second technique is also 300 baud; but the newer 1,200 bits/second technique is actually 600 baud, because each symbol carries two bits.

For many years electrical engineers have benefited from the availability of both units. But as computers have become tools of the laity, the distinction between them has been lost. Therefore I cannot honestly criticize Jonas for his inaccuracy; in another decade perhaps

even the technical dictionaries will merge the units' meanings.

CHARLES L. TILL, JR.
Raleigh, N.C.

Gerald Jonas replies:

People will what PCs won't;
Bauds scan, bits/second don't.

AIDS AND WOMEN

I was mystified by the debate between Judith Wilson Ross, of UCLA, and Katie Leishman in the October Letters to the Editor regarding the latter's article "Heterosexuals and AIDS," in the February, 1987, issue.

It will probably come as a surprise to most readers to know that, for example, there have been only about seventy-five cases of AIDS among Caucasian females who did not use intravenous drugs, had not received blood transfusions, and whose mates were not already known to have the disease (and even in these cases infection through bisexual men was sometimes a factor, while in others the problem of complete honesty about sexual history may apply). That AIDS has been compared to the bubonic plague of the Middle Ages is a measure of how far from reality some concerned people have drifted.

SCOTT S. SMITH
Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Katie Leishman replies:

I am amazed at the suggestion that the number of heterosexual AIDS cases remains reassuringly low—when restricted to whites. That there are "only about seventy-five cases of AIDS among Caucasian women . . ." (a number Mr. Smith holds down by introducing a list of qualifications) reflects only the number of people infected five or six years ago and suggests nothing about the number infected since. The unattributed figure is in any case implausible: the New York City Health Department recently estimated that 400,000 New Yorkers are HIV-positive. At about the same time, the department revealed the discovery of 2,500 "lost" cases of AIDS, virtually all of them among heterosexual drug users and their sex partners, that had never been officially registered. This revelation meant that gays had never been the primary risk group and that the potential for the eruption of AIDS in the general community was greater than anyone had imagined. Cases still lost are likely

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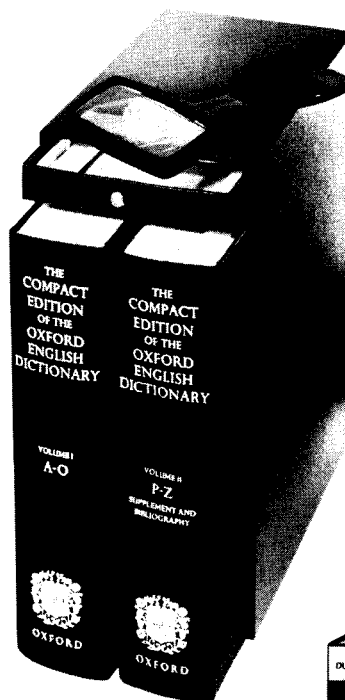
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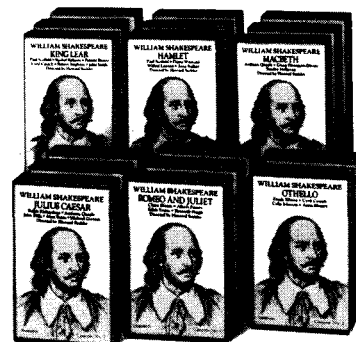


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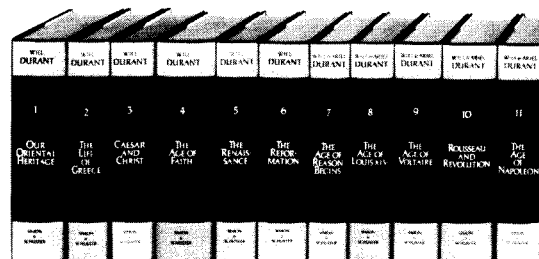
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8-64

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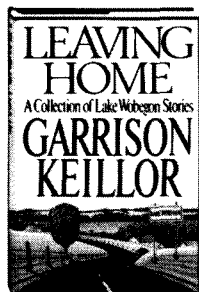
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8-04

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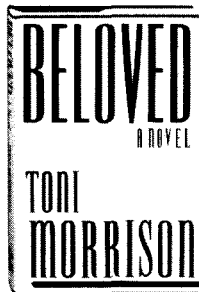
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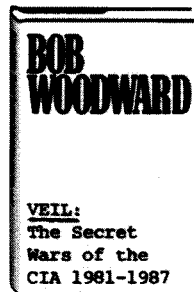
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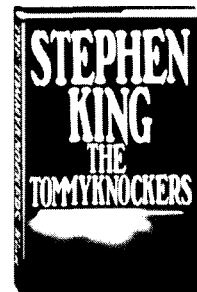
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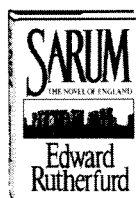
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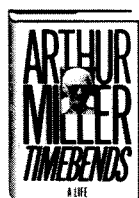
337 Pub. price \$19.95



131 Pub. price \$19.95



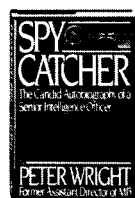
715 Pub. price \$15.95



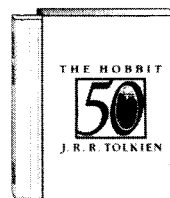
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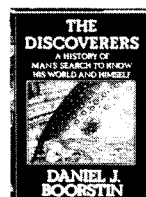
053 Pub. price \$29.95



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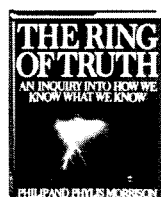
154 Pub. price \$22.50



422 Pub. price \$25



748 Pub. price \$19.95



230 Pub. price \$24.95



101 Pub. price \$18.95



293 Pub. price \$18.95



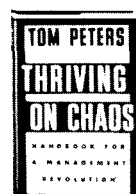
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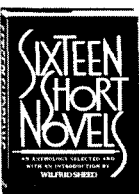
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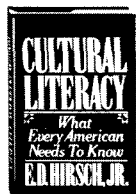
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657 Pub. price \$29.95



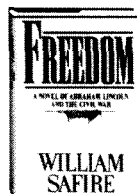
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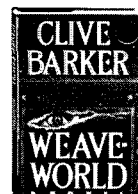
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143 Pub. price \$24.95



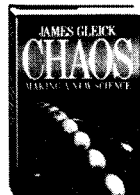
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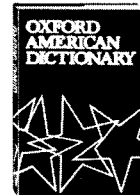
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Facts about Membership

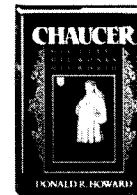
As a member you will receive the *Book-of-the-Month Club News*® 15 times a year (about every 3½ weeks). Every issue reviews a Selection and more than 125 other books, which are carefully chosen by our editors. If you want the Selection, do nothing. It will be shipped to you automatically. If you want one or more other books—or no book at all—indicate your decision on the Reply Form and return it by the specified date. **Return Privilege:** If the *News* is delayed and you receive the Selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return it for credit at our expense. **Cancellations:** Membership may be discontinued, either by you or by the Club, at any time after you have bought 4 additional books. Join today. With savings and choices like these, Book-of-the-Month Club is where book lovers belong.



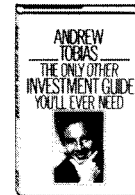
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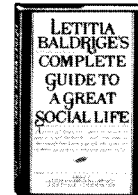
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307 Pub. price \$29.95



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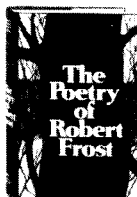
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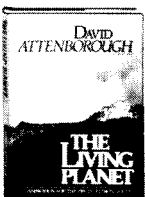
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to lie outside current risk groups, for that is where researchers are not looking. If Mr. Smith were a woman, "Caucasian" or otherwise, I doubt that he would be so complacent.

As for the bubonic plague, most authorities believe that the American medical establishment, government, and public under- rather than over-reacted in the first years after the discovery of AIDS. It is surprising to hear someone express a desire for even less alarm.

TRADING PARTNERS

Regarding James Fallows's "Playing by Different Rules" (September *Atlantic*): My daughter, in college, has two Japanese exchange students for roommates. They tell her that most of the electronic equipment we see every day is not available in Japan. Many of the items that are for sale in Japan cost much more there than in the United States.

CHARLES F. NELSEN
Oakhurst, Calif.

James Fallows replies:

The roommates are right. On a visit to New York last year I ran into a Japanese friend I'd known in Tokyo. I asked him what he'd been doing all day. "Buying [Japanese] cameras!" he said. "*Yasui desu yo!*" (They're all so cheap!). On the New York-to-Tokyo flight a few days later I was hammering away on an NEC (that is, Nippon Electric Corporation) portable computer I'd bought at an American discount house. Japanese salarymen clustered around to get a look at what I was doing. They'd never seen such a machine, even though it was designed and built in Japan. American corporations are reviled for dumping their sub-standard drugs and food in the Third World. Japanese corporations dump their most advanced, cheapest goods on us.

ADVICE & CONSENT

In "Going to the Cats" (August *Atlantic*) Cullen Murphy explains the increasing proportion of cats to dogs on the basis of demographic and economic trends over the past decade—for example, contraction of family income, free time, and living space, and such associated traits as "self-absorption and modest horizons." His analysis is persuasive, but I believe it to be incomplete and, as a result, unnecessarily gloomy. If one

considers as well the difference in behavior and temperament between cats and dogs, a more sanguine picture emerges from the data.

Dogs, for the most part, are masters of social adaptation and owe their popularity largely to a remarkable ability to conform to human expectations. Their capacity for obedience, even subservience, is prized, their participation in human activities (jogging, for example) encouraged, and their uncritical love and acceptance of their owners considered an appealing and valuable trait. In a sense, dogs succeed by modeling their behavior after that of a well-behaved child—human, not animal. They are beloved precisely to the extent that they manage to abrogate their animal nature and assume this role.

In contrast, cats clearly have no interest in any such accommodation. An obedient cat is a contradiction in terms on the order of military music and governmental efficiency. In fact, compliant behavior can be a warning sign of illness: the last time my cat acted like a dog, she was febrile and turned out to have a viral flu. Defervescence and recovery were heralded by a return to her accustomed independent activities and smug indifference to my presence and wishes. This, of course, is what appeals to me and many others about cats: the fact that they *remain* cats and make no effort—a corrupt one, in our view—to act human in order to garner affection, furniture, and extra food.

A relationship with a cat, more so than with a dog, is an opportunity to be with an animal on its own terms, to enter its world rather than drag it into ours, and to gain some understanding of its approach to life. For example, one can observe and emulate a type of friendship characterized by affection and loyalty but not excessive demands for proof of this throughout the day. And many other things as well. People who find this sort of knowledge of compelling interest and importance, if they possess academic talent, may become ethologists and make a career of it. For most of us, it must suffice to have a pet. As windows to the animal world, house cats are not unique, but they are easier to live with than jaguars or alligators, and they seem happy to join us in civilized society.

What, then, does it tell us that cats are becoming more popular? I prefer to think that it suggests a bit of spiritual evolution on our part. Increasingly, we are learning to appreciate animals for

who they are rather than what we wish to make them. We are willing to relate to them, and perhaps to other human beings, in a less autocratic way, with more respect for their autonomy, and with less need to manipulate them. We are, moreover, less certain that our own view of the world and ways of doing things are the only ones, and more willing to learn from others. While Murphy detects only contraction of the human spirit in the rising popularity of cats, I think there is enlargement.

ROBERT S. HOFFMAN
San Francisco, Calif

"We are so vast and small, so much at home in this place where we are lost. Maybe it is not remarkable then, that we sometimes say what can be said." And "Waiting, for gulls, is the grand event." I read, then reread, Floy C. Stuart's "The Salt Marsh" (October *Atlantic*)—a compelling and beautiful written "meditation on the passage of time."

ELIZABETH GALVIN
Ennismore, Ontario

Regarding the essay by Albert Bergesen on time capsules ("Oh, Well, July *Atlantic*) and the braggadocio of various recent correspondents claiming feats of Atlantic Puzzler prowess: I solved Cox & Rathvon's mad conundrums several years in advance while locked in a isolation tank inside my neighbor's garage. I then place these psychically acquired solutions in various institutions and community time capsules as they become available. But, alas! will they ever be found and my remarkable talent uncovered?

MICHAEL PALME
Portland, Or

Philip Langdon's article "The Automated House" (October *Atlantic*) graphically describes the advantages of installing home-automation systems to ease some of the details of modern life.

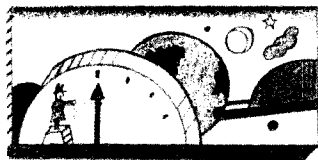
I bring to your attention how appropriate these systems are for housing for the elderly and disabled, whether privately or publicly funded. Electronic innovations such as those described in the article would enable thousands of people to maintain their independence rather than be forced into nursing homes because of difficulty in managing some of the burdens of advancing age.

PAULINE R. KATZ
Brookline, Mass

THE JANUARY ALMANAC

DEMOGRAPHICS

Americans take a vacation from shopping centers and malls this month. If previous January trends are repeated, the volume of clothing sales will decrease by 60 percent; the volume of retail sales overall will decrease by as much as 30 percent. Goods that sell briskly in January are mainly those associated with bad weather: for instance, children's vitamins, vaporizer additives, and car batteries. Not surprisingly, the year's highest unemployment rates usually occur in January. The number of out-of-work Americans, many of them former department-store clerks and cashiers, will rise this month by about a million.

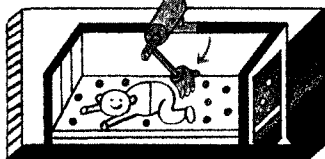


THE SKIES

The year 1988 is starting one second late; this is because a "leap second" was added to 1987, at 23:59:59 on December 31, Universal Coordinated Time, to correct for the slightly erratic (and slowing) rotation of Earth. The decision to add a second to man's time is made by the Bureau International de l'Heure, in Paris. January 3, Full Moon, also known this month as the Wolf Moon; at 1:00 P.M. EST on this day Earth reaches its perihelion—the point closest to the Sun; later this night watch for the Quadrantid meteor shower. 19, New Moon.

NEW STAMPS

January 2 and 9, two 22¢ stamps honoring the bicentennial of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in Georgia and Connecticut to be issued in Atlanta and Hartford. 26, a U.S. 22¢ and an Australian 37¢ stamp to be issued jointly in Washington, D.C., and Canberra, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of British settlement in Australia.

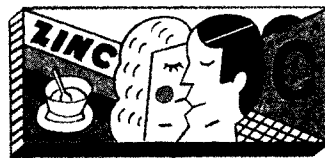


EXPIRING PATENT

No. 3,552,388. Baby-patting machine: "A device for patting a baby to sleep by means of periodic pats upon the rump or hind part of the baby, the device comprising a bracket supporting a motor having [a] pulley on the motor shaft, and the pulley supporting an arm having a soft pad at one end which pats the baby."

ARTS & LETTERS

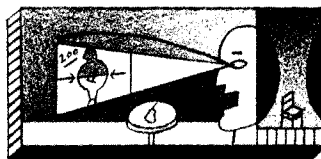
Sometime this month American prime-time TV will make its debut in the People's Republic of China and some 500 million Chinese will get a chance to see *The Winds of War*. This and other American programs to be aired were chosen by China Central TV, the national television network, from a list of recommendations made by Universal, Paramount, and MGM-UA studios. Coming soon: *The Jesse Owens Story*, *Space*, *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, *Columbo*, and *Family Affair*. January 11, the winners of the John Newbery and Randolph Caldecott medals, awarded to a children's book author and artist, respectively, to be announced today.



HEALTH & SAFETY

The common-cold season is in full swing; this year's fad cure is zinc. The scientific evidence in support of zinc as a preventive or remedy is, alas, about as slim as that for the powers of Vitamin C or chicken soup (if chicken soup *does* work, it may be because of the steam). Hand-to-hand contact spreads colds with abandon but kissing does not; cold viruses appear capable of infecting cells in the

nose but not those in the mouth. The most promising recent scientific findings about colds involve "kinins"—chemicals that appear to be associated with such symptoms as sore throats and runny noses. It remains to be seen, however, whether it is possible to block kinins and alleviate cold symptoms. Research is under way.



FOOD

In the month ending with the third week in January, if past trends hold, the membership of Weight Watchers International will double. And if past trends hold, membership will thereafter diminish at a faster rate than the members themselves. According to the Calorie Control Council, in Atlanta, a third of U.S. adults make 3 to 5 attempts a year at dieting.

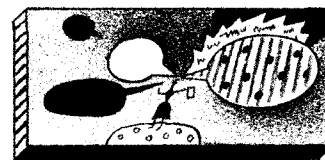
ENVIRONMENT

"The blackest month of all the year/Is the month of Jani-veer"—old English proverb. January is the coldest month, on average, throughout the country, but low spirits and low mercury are often buoyed late in the month by the more or less regular January thaw. Meteorologists call such a temperature abnormality a "singularity," and have determined that this one most often comes between the 20th and the 26th. Watch for honeybees to emerge from their hives in a futile search for flowers, and for tiny, litter-dwelling snow fleas to appear on the surface of the snow in great hordes, feeding on the algae that grow there, and reproducing.



GOVERNMENT

January 1, as mandated by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, a new 2-bracket system replaces last year's 5-bracket one (which in turn replaced the old 15-bracket system). For the nation's wealthiest taxpayers (couples with a taxable income above \$149,250, for example) the phase-out of the personal exemption begins; for the rest, the personal exemption rises slightly, to \$1,950. And after this day presidential candidates who requested and qualified for federal funds to match campaign contributions by individuals can begin collecting that money, even if they have dropped out of the race. Joseph Biden, who withdrew in September, has qualified to receive federal funds. Gary Hart, who did not apply for federal funds until *after* his withdrawal, has not qualified to receive federal funds. 19, the 100th Congress reconvenes.



125 YEARS AGO

Nathaniel Hawthorne, recounting a conversation with Miss Delia Salter Bacon, a proponent of the "Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays" theory, in the January, 1863, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "Unquestionably, she was a monomaniac; these overmastering ideas about the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, and the deep political philosophy concealed beneath the surface of them, had completely thrown her off her balance; but at the same time they had wonderfully developed her intellect, and made her what she could not otherwise have become. It was a very singular phenomenon: a system of philosophy growing up in this woman's mind without her volition . . . and substituting itself in the place of everything that originally grew there."



REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES

EPHEMERAL STATES

SHORTLY BEFORE DAWN that fateful morning, the waters of a stormy Pacific began to rise against the shores of the Republic of Minerva. In just a few hours the entire island nation was inundated. Only later did the dimensions of the tragedy become clear. When the waters receded, no creature or structure remained.

Well, actually, it wasn't all that tragic. There hadn't been any creatures or structures to begin with. And the submersion of Minerva—in truth, just a bunch of rocks some 400 miles south of Fiji—is a regular event. It happens twice each day, at high tide.

Even at low tide most of Minerva is under water. But this and other disheartening facts did not dissuade a handful of American businessmen from declaring sovereignty over it in 1972 and attempting to establish the sort of country they felt the United States ought to be but

wasn't: no welfare, no foreign aid, no income tax. They built a small platform on the rocks and planted their flag, a yellow torch of freedom on a blue sea. Their president, Morris C. Davis, of California, wrote letters seeking diplomatic recognition from several other sovereign states, including the nearby island kingdom of Tonga.

This turned out to be a mistake. Tonga's King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, anxious to preserve his nation's fishing rights, went to war against the Minervans. (You may recall seeing the 350-pound Tongan monarch at the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana.) In the best imperial tradition he dispatched a boatful of convicts to erect a larger platform on top of Morris's and to raise the Tongan flag in place of the yellow and blue. Minerva's first and, quite possibly, only murder took place that same day: one of the convicts killed another by smacking him with a crowbar.

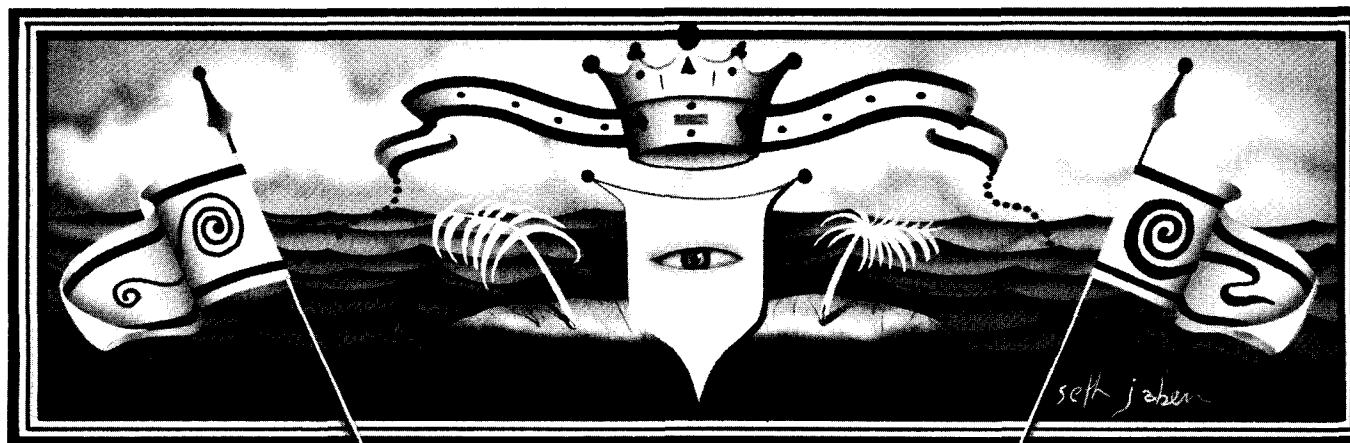
THE BRIEF AND bloody history of Minerva is chronicled in a file at the Department of State, in Washington, D.C. The file is kept by Dr. George J. Demko, the director of an obscure bureau called the Office of the Geographer.

Demko is a big, friendly, enthusiastic man with gray hair, a gray moustache and glasses. His official responsibilities in his view, include almost everything. "You show me a topic and I'll find you a geographic angle to it," he told me when I visited him recently. "Everything is geographic. *Everything* is geographic. And if it ain't geographic, it ain't important."

In any contest to determine who loved geography more, you or Demko, Demko would win. It is his consuming passion. He has a Ph.D. in it, and for twenty years he taught it at Ohio State University. Then, in 1984, he was called to serve the geographic needs of his country.

Demko was not impressed by what he found at the State Department. "This office was full of people with little green eyeshades and little pens," he told me. "They were doing little boundary thing and little law-of-the-sea stuff. Well we've taken the office from Dickens to Buck Rogers. Now we're all computerized. I revived this office and turned it into a viable geographic research-and-intelligence operation. I'm curmudgeonly, interesting, and modest."

When I had trouble thinking of questions about geography to ask Demko



OF THE FINER THINGS SWEDEN MAKES, THE FINEST MAY BE ITS COFFEE.

The words "made in Sweden" have always stood for uncompromising quality and artistry. From automobiles that set new standards of performance to films that expand the boundaries of creativity. But Sweden's finest hour is said to have arrived with its now legendary coffee, Gevalia® Kaffe.

One fair day in 1853, a Swede named Victor Theodor Engwall fulfilled his lifelong obsession to create a perfect cup of coffee. Rich, full-bodied, without bitterness. As good in the cup as fine coffee smells at the moment of grinding. Good enough, in fact, for the King of Sweden. To this day, Gevalia carries the Royal Seal of Approval.

Indeed, today's Gevalia is produced with the same obsessive commitment to perfection. Coffee growers the world over recognize Gevalia's "Engwall Standard" as the most demanding in the business: only top-quality beans are considered—and even then, only one of every four is found acceptable for Gevalia Kaffe.

Gevalia actually blends up to six varieties of highly prized Arabica beans—from countries like Kenya, Guatemala and Costa Rica—to create its characteristic high flavor notes and delicate nuances. Swedes, after all, feel as passionately about coffee



as the French do fine wine.

There's yet another reason for Gevalia's superior flavor: its impeccable freshness. Roasted faster, it's then vacuum-sealed faster—within seconds. Because even the finest whole beans rapidly grow stale when exposed to air, as in gourmet shop bins.

REGULAR AND NATURALLY DECAFFEINATED

Gevalia comes whole bean or ground in a variety of full-bodied roasts. But perhaps the biggest revelation is Gevalia Decaffeinated. Caffeine is removed naturally by gently soaking the beans in water,

then treating them with the same natural elements that put the effervescence in sparkling water. The result is full coffee flavor. Drinking decaffeinated is no longer a compromise.

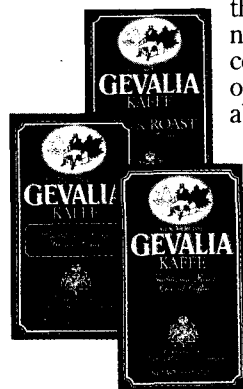
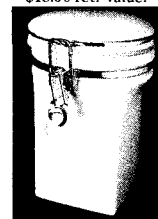
A REGAL BRIBE

As this exceptional Swedish coffee is not available in mass market quantities, the only way to order is from our Import Service. Just fill out the attached reply form. We will send you the white ceramic Regal Gevalia Kaffe Canister, embossed in gold with the Royal Crest of Sweden (retail value \$18.00).

It's free with trial membership.

So discover Gevalia Kaffe. And make one of Sweden's finer things your own.

A Regal Gift
\$18.00 ret. value.



*By Appointment to His Majesty
the King of Sweden.*

GEVALIA KAFFE
A SWEDISH OBSESSION.

Demko offered to ask them himself. He said, "The questions that should come to your mind are, 'Who reads your stuff?' and 'Give me some other examples of exciting projects you have done.' Well, our stuff is read by almost everybody. For example, we did the geography of the famine in Africa some years ago, and Vice President Bush took our maps and materials to a conference in Geneva. We also do a lot of important work on boundaries. This country now has five outstanding maritime boundary disputes with Canada. We also have disputes with the Soviet Union, Cuba, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic." I finally did think of a question about geography ("Have they solved the four-color-map problem yet?"), but Demko was talking when I thought of it and by the time he had stopped I couldn't remember what it was.

One function of the Office of the Geographer that has survived from its Dickensian, pre-Demko era is keeping track of what Demko calls "mythical kingdoms" or "ephemeral states." These are nonexistent countries that ordinary people periodically claim to have founded or become the rulers of. Often these people will write to the Secretary of State or even the President seeking official recognition from the United States. These letters are usually forwarded to the Office of the Geographer.

One such letter came from a man who, while "searching through some old things," had discovered various documents entitling him to rule the Panama Canal Zone. Another came from "William Shakespeare, Minister of Music, United Nations Ministry of Music." Quite a few came from a woman who described herself as "a Realestate Broker of Calif. and a Mining Executive of the U.S.A. and anywhere for that matter." She spent much of the 1950s wrestling with the question of whether to renounce her American citizenship in order to become Queen of the Atlantic and Pacific Empire of Atlantis and Lemuria, also known as Atlantis Kaj Lemuria. In 1954 she received a letter from the Office of the Geographer which said, with evident exasperation, "In the conduct of the foreign relations of this government, the Department of State does not recognize any so-called 'private Dynasty or Principality' named 'Atlantis Kaj Lemuria.'"

Of course, this letter amounted to recognition of a sort, and the woman kept at it. In other correspondence she revealed that her empire included islands

called Flamingo, Odino, and Thoro. In 1958 she persuaded her congressman, the Honorable Craig Hosmer, to send a letter to the State Department spelling out her belief that she could retain her U.S. citizenship and still rule her empire "as governor-general." The folder on Atlantis Kaj Lemuria is the fattest one in Demko's ephemeral-states collection.

DEMKO DIVIDES THE makers of the ephemeral world into three categories: nuts, funnies, and charlatans. I didn't ask him specifically, but I suspect that he would place the creator of Atlantis Kaj Lemuria in the first category. Sharing it would probably be those who founded the People's Democratic Republic of Quay, the Kingdom of Redonda, the Republic of the Isle of Dogs (not to be confused with the Kingdom of Yap), Luconia, Aphrodite, Furstentum Castellania, the Maori Kingdom of Te-titi, and the Nation of Aryan-Pacific, also known as the United Kingdom of Arya.

Arya was founded in 1981 by a Californian who hoped that his country, an island "located within easy sailing of either Los Angeles or Honolulu," would become a bastion of racial purity. At some point he substantially extended the scope of his authority by annexing 500,000 square miles of Antarctica. His government promised to provide free food, free housing, free medical care, and a sixteen-hour work week, and to impose no income tax.

Some people start their own countries just for fun. In 1948 a rich man named Russell Arundel, one of Demko's funnies, got together with some of his fishing buddies and founded the Principality of Outer Baldonia. The country consisted of several small islands that Arundel owned, off the coast of Nova Scotia. Arundel's official title was Prince of Princes. His government was based on drinking, swearing, gambling, and lying about the size of fish. He established the value of his nation's currency each day at the cocktail hour, and he once declared war on the Soviet Union. Another fun country was El Almandine, an eighteen-foot-by-ten-foot platform in Bowie, Maryland, which in 1973 was ruled by a thirteen-year-old boy.

Small platforms play a surprisingly large role in the history of imaginary nations. In 1964 Leicester Hemingway, the author of *My Brother, Ernest Hemingway*, founded a country called New Atlantis on an eight-foot-by-thirty-foot

bamboo platform six and a half miles off the coast of Jamaica. Hemingway is officially classified as a funny, although historians may treat him less kindly. His platform was held in place by steel cables, a ship's anchor, a railroad axle and wheels, and an old Ford engine block, according to an account in *The New York Times*. Hemingway told the paper, "We can stand on the platform, walk around on it and salute the flag, all of which we do periodically." Hemingway said he hoped to enlarge the platform someday so that he and his seven fellow citizens might have room to eat lunch or go to sleep. New Atlantis issued postage stamps honoring Lyndon Johnson and had no income tax.

A few years later Hemingway founded another island nation, called Tierra de Mar. This project received surprisingly serious attention from the government. A memorandum in Demko's file, describing a 1973 meeting between Hemingway and four officials of the State Department, says, "Attempts at creating this island would be viewed by the United States as a highly undesirable development adverse to our national interest, particularly as it might encourage an archipelagic claim." Hemingway's title, according to the State Department was "alleged president." Another memorandum described him as "not kook." Tierra del Mar had no income tax.

Other would-be sovereigns have had far grander schemes. In 1975 two charlatans sent a letter to Henry Kissinger laying claim to the floor of the Pacific Ocean, "completely excluding therefrom, all Sea Water extending above the Ocean Floor." Another man (John the First, Prince of Mariveles and Amboyne and by the Grace of God King of Colonia) claimed everything within a certain 46,000-square-nautical-mile area in the South China Sea. Colonia's official language was English, but "other accepted languages" were Arabic, Chinese, and Malay. There was no income tax.

The South China Sea, which is filled with thousands of tiny islands, has been home to a disproportionately large number of ephemeral states. One of them is the Republic of Morac-Songhrat Meads, founded by Morton F. Mead. Morac-Songhrati-Meads is located in the Spratly Islands. It used to be known as the Kingdom of Humanity. I know nothing about the Kingdom of Humanity, because the document in the

Office of the Geographer that pertains to it is classified, for some reason. Demko removed it from the charlatan file and put it where I couldn't see it.

Demko also asked me not to mention too many specifics about another Meads-related document, a hefty legal summons (issued by the "Morac-Songh-rati-Meads Court of Special Cases, Pennsylvania VI Island") whose list of defendants is so long that I was almost surprised not to find my own name on it. I don't think I am revealing any (American) state secrets by reporting that the lawsuit concerns "infringement, plagiarism, unfair competition, false identification, fraud, harassment, sabotage, and DAMAGES." The plaintiffs are seeking \$1 trillion plus attorneys' fees plus 12 percent annual interest on the whole package compounded since 1969.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES a real country from an imaginary one? According to Demko, genuine statehood has five characteristics: space, population, economic activity, governmental structure, and recognition. "Recognition is the hard one," he told me—although the other characteristics can cause difficulties too. Demko is now preparing a report on "stateless nations," groups of people with a common cultural heritage who might be considered to constitute real countries except that the space they occupy is already occupied by other countries. There are quite a few such groups. Demko's report will focus on four representative ones: the Kurds, the Basques, the Sikhs, and the Armenians.

Similar to the stateless nations are the so-called captive nations—chief among them Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. These three Baltic states were annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940, a fact that is officially not recognized by the United States and a number of other countries. The United States continues to maintain diplomatic relations, after a fashion, with the captive nations. All three are represented in this country by chargés d'affaires. Every year the President of the United States issues a Captive Nations Proclamation during Captive Nations Week.

It isn't hard to understand why people want to start their own countries, or why people who used to have their own countries want them back. National identity is an important ingredient in the human psyche. The psychology of geography is a subject about which Demko undoubtedly has a great deal to say, al-

though I neglected to ask him about it.

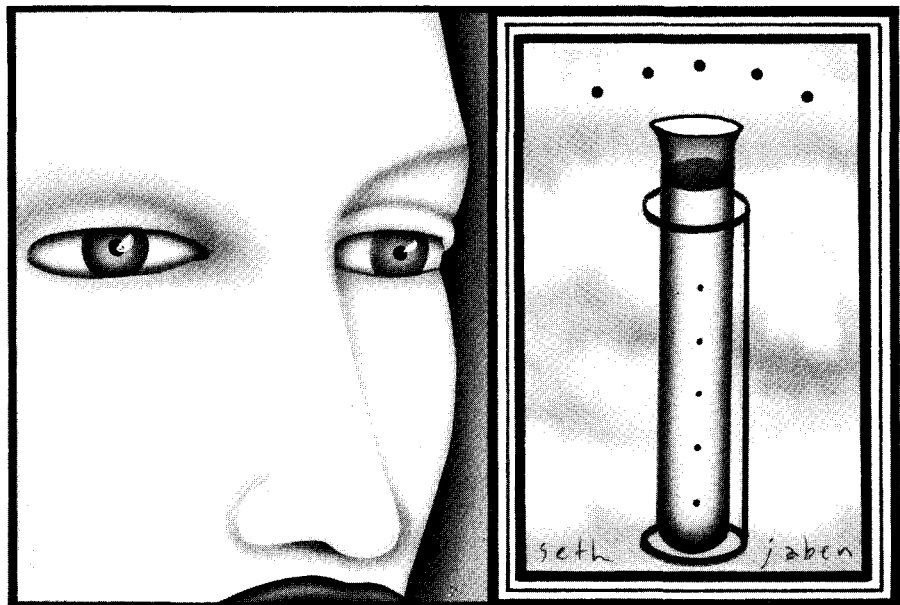
One thing Demko did say is that no one had ever written to his office claiming sovereignty over anything in outer space. *No one?* Shortly after I got home, I wrote him a letter claiming the sun in the name of this magazine. It may never come to anything, but who knows? "From now on," I told Demko in my letter, "the sun should be referred to as the Solar Atlantic Empire." I signed myself Lord High Suzerain of Outer Space and requested official recognition from the State Department.

Demko wrote back acknowledging re-

ceipt of my letter and requesting "copies of your pertinent state documents (e.g. Constitution, Declarations, etc.), map of state and evidence of recognition of your sovereign status by the majority of recognized, sovereign states on earth." I assume this is just a formality, but I would welcome hearing from national leaders interested in setting up diplomatic relations with me. I'd also like to hear from anyone below the level of leader who would be interested in becoming one of my citizens.

Incidentally, there's no income tax.

—David Owen



PUBLIC HEALTH AIDS AND SYPHILIS

*Researchers in the United States
and Germany have startling hypotheses
about the relationship of
the two diseases*

AT THE NEW York City Bureau of Sexually Transmitted Disease Control, the year got off to a strange start. In February reports of syphilis—which had been declining steadily for twenty years—suddenly began pouring in. Week after week the numbers rose, until, by summer, the bureau had recorded an astonishing 105 percent increase in syphilis cases over the total for the first six months of 1986. (Other sexually transmitted diseases had risen 10 to 15 percent over their early-1986 levels.) Moreover, for all of 1986, the great ma-

jority of syphilis cases (72 percent) occurred among men. In the first half of 1987 almost half the cases had occurred in women, which made for a 150 percent increase in female cases over the first half of 1986. In 1986 the city had some 2,000 cases of syphilis. By last October there were more than 4,000 cases. John Miles, the director of the bureau, says, "What happened in February? We simply don't know."

The cases were not only mysterious in terms of numbers; they were clinically remarkable. The introduction of penicillin in 1945, followed by the widespread use of antibiotics, gradually muted the early manifestations of syphilis, in particular the characteristic genital and oral sores, or chancres. However, in the current outbreak doctors are seeing a more florid syphilis, more-inflamed chancres and rashes, than "anything we've seen in twenty years," according to John Miles. The rise in syphilis was immediately preceded by a bizarre outbreak of another ulcerating genital disease, called



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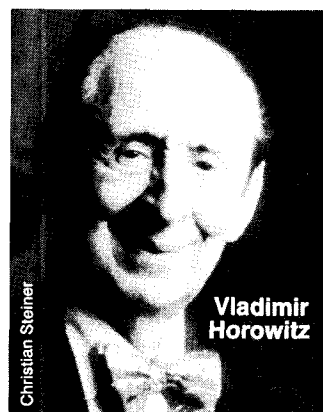
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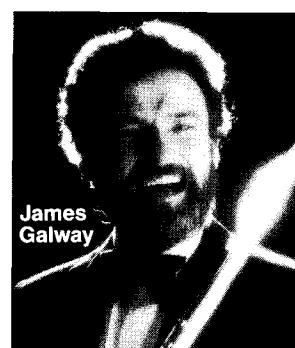
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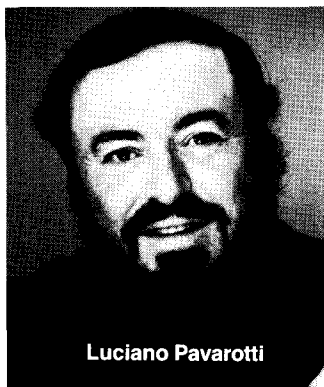
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chancroid. There were 450 cases in New York City in 1985, and in 1986 there were 3,500. "It came out of nowhere," Miles says.

The New York syphilis epidemic is not unique. The Centers for Disease Control last summer reported that the first quarter of 1987 showed a 23 percent nationwide increase in syphilis, relative to the first quarter of 1986. Most of the increase occurred among heterosexuals, and followed an earlier-reported rise in congenital syphilis, in which an infected mother passes on the disease to an unborn child. A few CDC authorities believed that there might be a new strain of syphilis. Some epidemiologists argued, with no proof, that the increases were due to a shift of funds from venereal-disease surveillance to AIDS programs. Yet the incidence of no other common venereal disease had risen in anything like the explosive fashion that the incidence of syphilis had.

Classically, the course of syphilis has four stages, the first of which is characterized by chancres. Untreated, the disease proceeds to the second stage within six weeks to three months, producing an array of vague symptoms—hair loss, sore joints, rashes, swollen lymph nodes, weight loss—that often result in misdiagnoses, which have earned syphilis its reputation as medicine's great masquerader. In the second stage, and perhaps as early as the first, the bacterial organism that causes syphilis, the spirochete *Treponema pallidum*, may enter the aqueous humor of the eye and the cerebrospinal fluid and may lodge in the brain. If untreated or treated inadequately, the syphilis goes into latency and years later can erupt in tertiary syphilis, which can take the form of cardiovascular or ocular syphilis or neurosyphilis.

To venereal-disease experts tracking the new epidemic, it seemed frighteningly clear that early syphilis, with the penile, cervical, and anal lesions it produces, might contribute unpredictably to the transmission of AIDS. In one clinic in Queens, the New York City Department of Health found that 20 percent of men and women previously diagnosed as having syphilis were also infected with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus, the virus associated with AIDS). Whether the syphilis or the HIV had come first was not known, but a sense of a unique relationship between the two diseases seemed to be emerging. The heterosexual epidemic of syphilis might

even hold clues to how AIDS broke out in the gay community almost a decade ago.

The new wave of syphilis, alarming enough in itself, coincided with a growing number of reports of relapses of syphilis in patients who had received what today is generally considered adequate treatment—a single injection of 2.4 million units of benzathine penicillin. Dr. Nicholas Fiumara, who recently retired after thirty-two years as the director of the department of infectious diseases at the Massachusetts State Health Department, and who is among the nation's most respected syphilologists, has for a decade argued that this dosage level, recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, is inadequate and should be at least doubled. In an editorial in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* last January, Dr. Mary Guinan, of the CDC, wrote, "When comments were being solicited for updating the 1982 CDC Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, more questions were raised regarding syphilis treatment than any of the other 26 diseases or syndromes discussed." She offered two possible explanations for the reported treatment failures: the *Treponema pallidum* might, theoretically, have developed penicillin resistance, although there was no evidence for this; and the immune response of the patient might have been compromised. Reports from Africa have for years indicated that malnourished and therefore immunodeficient patients manifest a more aggressive clinical form of syphilis, and treatment failures among such patients have suggested that penicillin alone may not be effective in the absence of a healthy immune response. This second theory seemed ominous in the midst of the AIDS epidemic—especially because gay and bisexual men from the mid-1970s until recently have accounted for up to half the cases of syphilis in this country.

The bad news was not long in coming. *The New England Journal of Medicine* last summer published several striking reports concerning HIV-infected patients who developed neurosyphilis despite having received the standard therapy for early syphilis. One patient in a *NEJM* report advanced to neurosyphilis within five months of initial infection, leading his doctors to wonder whether HIV infection might not only activate latent syphilis but also sometimes accelerate the course of the disease. Weeks after-

ward researchers at St. Mary's Hospital, in London, reported the same phenomenon and raised the question, How much of what doctors had been referring to as AIDS dementia was actually neurosyphilis?

THE IDEA THAT sometimes penicillin might only mitigate the symptoms of early syphilis, destroying many treponemes without eliminating those that had already reached the brain, was hardly new. Twenty years ago Dr. J. Lawton Smith, a professor of ophthalmology at the University of Miami School of Medicine, reported recovering treponemes from the ocular fluid of patients who had received the standard treatment for syphilis and yet were suffering from ocular and neurological disorders suggestive of syphilis—sensory loss, detached retinas, retinal abnormalities, optic atrophy, even blindness. Moreover, many of these patients showed negative results on the fluorescent treponemal antibody (FTA) test, which is generally regarded as the most reliable and should remain reactive for life in anyone who has or has ever had syphilis. Critics of Smith's work say that there are many spiral organisms in the eye and that no one can prove that what he found were syphilis spirochetes—and that even if one could, the patients might have been reinfected since their treatment. Smith replies that the sheer number of cases he has seen since the sixties presents overwhelming support for his theories. He cites a study published last December in the *Journal of Clinical Neuro-Ophthalmology*, in which researchers at an ambulatory eye clinic in Detroit administered the FTA to 250 patients who were seen during a five month period. Fifty-two percent of them had a reactive FTA.

Tests for syphilis can be done either on blood or on cerebrospinal fluid. There are two sorts of tests, specific and nonspecific. The most widely used nonspecific tests, the Venereal Disease Research Laboratory (VDRL) and the rapid plasma reagin (RPR), measure level of a general antibody that the body produces in response to the presence of syphilis and several other infections. The specific tests, the most common of which are the FTA and the microhemagglutination assay for *T. pallidum* (MHA-TP), detect the specific antibody to treponemes themselves, and are usually used only in confirming the diagnosis when someone has a reactive VDRL or RPR, because they are much more

expensive and time-consuming. (Most blood banks apply only the VDRL and the RPR.) Antibody levels above a certain point on the VDRL or the RPR indicate currently active syphilis, and after treatment the decline of antibody levels is monitored to be certain that the person has been cured. Whether cases are typically followed up for long enough, however, has been seriously questioned lately.

Although invaluable, the tests have never been perfect, and meticulous clinical evaluation has always been necessary too in determining both the presence of infection and the effectiveness of treatment. However, although syphilis represented a huge part of many physicians' practices before the Second World War, in the era of antibiotics many doctors have never even knowingly seen a case of secondary syphilis, making misdiagnosis all the likelier. *The New York Native*, a gay newspaper that has relentlessly investigated the potential role of syphilis in AIDS, recently reported on a number of studies that detailed such misdiagnoses. One of these was a study of 241 patients with neurosyphilis who were seen at the Medical College of Virginia from July of 1965 to July of 1970. Nearly half of them, 115, had never been diagnosed as having any kind of syphilis. Another study, concerning twenty patients with primary and secondary syphilis who were seen during the 1970s at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center and at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, found that patients had been previously misdiagnosed as having everything from leukemia to hernias to multiple sclerosis. One patient was actually circumcised as a result of a misdiagnosed chancre.

These days many HIV-infected gay men and their physicians have an understandable tendency to attribute a rash, fever, or headache to the virus without ever considering another cause, such as syphilis. Even if tests for syphilis are administered, they detect the presence not of the treponemes themselves but of antibodies, and many doctors wonder whether HIV infection might suppress the body's ability to produce certain antibodies normally—a concern voiced in an editorial published last June in *The New England Journal of Medicine* by Dr. Edmund Tramont, the chief of infectious disease at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. Fiumara maintains that the syphilis tests are as reliable in AIDS patients as on any others. None-

theless, a study of which Tramont was a co-author, published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* last October, describes an HIV-infected patient with symptoms of active secondary syphilis whose VDRL and FTA were inexplicably negative. As the patient was treated for syphilis, however, both his VDRL and his FTA became reactive.

The case is not an isolated one, and the reliability of the specific tests is under scrutiny. Miles, Inc., which produces the MHA-TP, is planning to change the instructions on the package. "We've had reports about the reliability of the test in AIDS patients," says Dr. Augustine Gonzales, the medical director for Miles. "The Centers for Disease Control is well aware of the problem. We have to let users know that when patients have conditions that may lead to immunodepression—such as AIDS but not only AIDS—users must consider a diagnosis of syphilis even when the test is negative." Although AIDS prompted the company to act, officials there realize that far wider problems may potentially exist. How much immunodepression is necessary before syphilis-test results are skewed? How many people other than AIDS patients might be involved? "We are going to explore these issues in the medical literature with great care," Gonzales says. "This is a very serious situation."

To an expert like Gonzales, it seems likely that a great deal of syphilis has been masked in HIV-infected people, since the diseases affect much the same populations and are largely transmitted in the same way, and since it can take years for an infected person to manifest symptoms of syphilis. The course of syphilis varies dramatically from patient to patient, as does the course of AIDS. A disproportionate number of the syphilis cases in this country in the past ten years have occurred in gay and bisexual men and drug users and their partners, with a much smaller proportion made up by newborns (who have contracted the disease congenitally) and recipients of blood transfusions. Moreover, in the tropics, where syphilis may go untreated generation after generation, it has become endemic, just as some authorities have predicted AIDS will eventually be. To a handful of maverick investigators, the overlap in the epidemiology of the two diseases is not only striking but also suspect. What if AIDS is simply a new manifestation of syphilis?

JOAN MCKENNA is a research physiologist and information scientist in Berkeley, California. She has never accepted the standard wisdom about HIV—that the virus is an organism that, alone, will in a matter of years or decades kill even the healthiest person infected by it.

The crucial target of the AIDS virus is said to be the T helper cells, one of the types of T cells, which are central to the body's immune response. Yet from her readings McKenna learned several years ago that the only cells in which Dr. Robert Gallo (of the National Institutes of Health), the country's leading AIDS researcher, could grow the virus were blood cells taken from a leukemia patient—"in other words, someone who was already immunosuppressed," she says. "There is absolutely no evidence that the virus can infect healthy T cells without extraordinary laboratory manipulation." She believes that the presence of HIV is a by-product of the disease, rather than the cause.

Knowing the phenomenal incidence of venereal disease in gays, McKenna suspected that the underlying immunocompromise in AIDS might be related to such infection and compounded by the heavy recreational- and prescription-drug use among many gay men. Reviewing hundreds of old volumes on sexually transmitted diseases, she found articles relating both pneumocystis carinii pneumonia and Kaposi's sarcoma, the most common disorders in AIDS patients, to syphilis. Dr. Moritz Kaposi had first identified the sarcoma lesions in syphilis patients. In addition McKenna found reports of the successful treatment of Kaposi's sarcoma with high doses of penicillin. The literature suggested that syphilitic patients are prone to various opportunistic infections, as AIDS patients are, although syphilis does not appear to suppress the immune system until its latent and tertiary stages. She tested twenty-four HIV-positive subjects (most of whom were ARC and AIDS patients) with a documented history of syphilis. Although all of their FTA tests should have been reactive, twenty-one were not. McKenna speculated that all AIDS patients might have syphilis.

She then charted the initial symptoms and concomitant infections associated with AIDS and those associated with syphilis. "I came up with nearly a one hundred percent match-up," she says. "It's time for Occam's razor: when you have a simple explanation, like syphilis,

and a more complicated one, like a fancy retrovirus, why not go with the simpler one and at least see where it takes you?"

IT TAKES YOU nowhere fast, according to most experts. Dr. James N. Miller, a professor of microbiology and immunology at the UCLA School of Medicine, who has investigated syphilis for more than thirty years, regards as "the height of folly" the notion that syphilis is the cause of AIDS. "You can match up symptoms of a number of diseases with those associated with AIDS," he says. "The singling out of syphilis is completely unwarranted." Fiumara echoes Miller's objection. Tramont points out that AIDS patients are routinely treated with a variety of antibiotics, which, he believes, would be sufficient to cure syphilis if it were present. Sheila Lukehart, a research associate professor of medicine at the University of Washington Medical School, who is studying the relationship between AIDS and syphilis, says flatly, "We're seeing AIDS in people who clearly don't have syphilis."

"How do we *know* they don't?" McKenna asks. "We're in a technological blind: the tests are not reliable in these patients." She will not even rule out the possibility that syphilis is the underlying problem in those AIDS patients who are recipients of transfusions or hemophiliacs who have received only Factor Eight, the highly processed and purified blood product that replaces the natural blood-clotting factor hemophiliacs lack. She hypothesizes that the plasma used for the transfusions and the Factor Eight production came from syphilitics, causing infection even though *Treponema pallidum* is extremely fragile and it seems highly unlikely that the organism could survive the filtration process involved in deriving Factor Eight from plasma. McKenna cites controversial research showing that in an experimental setting the plasma of syphilitics has immunosuppressive properties even when treponemes are not present—research that most syphilis experts dismiss as a laboratory phenomenon having no clinical application.

Any study of syphilis is complicated, because the organism cannot be grown outside a living host. Autopsy reviews seemed to McKenna to be one way to confirm or crush her theory, but she soon discovered that few autopsies are performed on AIDS patients, for fear of viral contagion. Finally she learned of Dr. Daniel Connor, now retired, then

the chairman of the Department of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases Pathology at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, in Washington, D.C. Connor told her that he had reviewed tissue specimens from two AIDS patients who had syphilis and had discovered something fascinating that had never before been reported: pustular abscesses in lymph nodes and testes, densely packed with treponemes, representing an acute reaction to syphilis. "This might be what syphilis looked like in the Middle Ages," he told her.

Since the mid-1600s syphilis has ordinarily taken many years to kill an infected person. But from 1490 to 1550 the disease swept through Western Europe; many thousands were stricken and died within a few years. Some medical historians have suggested that the attrition was due to the poor health of the population, while others maintain that a more virulent strain of syphilis, or one to which Europeans had never been exposed, was abroad. McKenna wondered if accounts of these medieval epidemics might shed some light on the present, and in the fall of 1986 took off for Europe to pursue research. Before leaving she read a scientific article about two doctors in Augsburg, West Germany—Klaus Uwe Dierig and Urban Waldthaler—who had treated several AIDS patients with massive doses of penicillin on the assumption that AIDS was a new strain of gonorrhea. She telephoned Dierig from Zurich and learned that since writing the article he had treated more patients and scrutinized the same medical literature she had, and now believed that what every AIDS patient was suffering from was actually syphilis.

KLAUS DIERIG AND Urban Waldthaler are anesthesiologists. In 1981 a bisexual friend called them for help. For several months he had experienced hot flashes, drastic weight loss, mental blurriness, and shortness of breath; he could barely climb a flight of stairs. He had spent three weeks in a university clinic, where doctors had found nothing. Because he had had persistent anal gonorrhea, Dierig and Waldthaler guessed that he might have endocarditis, a bacterial infection of a heart valve, which is an occasional complication of disseminated gonococcal infection, and which is treated with penicillin in high doses for a long term. He also had signs of several other infections that respond to penicillin. They gave him 40 million units of

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aqueous penicillin intravenously every day for twenty-one days. His symptoms disappeared. The day the treatment was completed, the local newspaper published its first report of a strange new disease that was affecting American homosexuals.

In 1985, when the antibody test for HIV (then known as HTLV-III) became available in Germany, Waldthaler tested the patient. He tested positive. Obviously, exposure could have occurred after his strange illness. A review of his laboratory tests from 1981, however, showed abnormalities consistent with AIDS. Dierig and Waldthaler went ahead and used the same penicillin regimen on six more ARC and AIDS patients, all of whom had neurological symptoms and all but one of whom had a reactive FTA. The patient who was negative for syphilis after several days of treatment had a Herxheimer's reaction—a distinctive, sometimes violent episode of fevers, chills, and headaches that is usually explained as an allergic reaction to the particles released as the penicillin destroys the spirochetes. However, Dierig and Waldthaler, and other European researchers, interpret the reaction as a sign that the immune system is making a comeback. The symptoms of what had been called the patient's AIDS dementia resolved within a week. All seven of the patients, now anywhere from six months to several years after treatment, are "clinically asymptomatic," according to Waldthaler. Although the two doctors believe that with syphilis one can never speak of a cure but only of remission, Dierig says that "if a patient's immune system is competent enough, the syphilis stays under control." The two have recently treated an eighth patient with a modified regimen: about 20 million units of penicillin a day intravenously for twenty-eight days.

In addition to observing the resolution of symptoms, Dierig and Waldthaler assessed laboratory results to confirm their theory. Most doctors evaluate an AIDS patient's status by reviewing his T-helper-cell count. In the majority of Dierig and Waldthaler's patients, the T-helper-cell count has returned to normal. However, the two doctors do not believe that the T helper count is particularly important, pointing out that "some AIDS patients with a T helper count of sixty are fine while others with a T helper count of three hundred are dying." Instead they look to another scale.

Many HIV-positive people have inexplicably high levels of "circulating immune complexes"—clusters of antibodies and antigen, the substance that stimulates antibody production. Although HIV antigen has been detected in some of these immune complexes, no one has known what the antigen was in the majority of them. Dierig claims that by using a new technique, which he is not ready to describe, he has established that the mysterious antigen is in fact treponemal antigen. He and his partner continue treatment on a patient until the level of immune complexes returns to normal.

The two are not suggesting that everyone who gets syphilis will get what Dierig calls "so-called AIDS." "A number of factors may determine the clinical presentation of syphilis that others call AIDS," he says, and he names as chief among them manner of exposure, coincident infection with gonorrhea, and the incidence of reinfection with syphilis.

Dierig believes that if someone contracts syphilis through contact with a chancre, meaning with the organism, the conventional treatment will be successful. But if he contracts it through blood-to-blood contact, as gay men typically do, not only have treponemes been transmitted but so have the powerful chemical changes their presence has produced in the body, according to Dierig. The resulting disease, he says, can be even more dangerous than the tertiary syphilis described in textbooks. The carrier may have been infected for more than ten years and may be infected with several stages of syphilis at once. Sexually active gay men are more likely than others to contract this form of syphilis, he believes, but anyone who is exposed to the profoundly infectious blood can, including babies *in utero*, intravenous drug users, and transfusion recipients.

The situation of homosexuals is especially complex, according to Dierig. Many of them have had gonorrhea, which reduces "complement"—a complex of proteins that act in combination with antibodies to destroy bacteria of many kinds. In the absence of complement antibodies to syphilis cannot immobilize the treponemes, which undulate; such immobilization is necessary before the body's infection-fighting macrophages can destroy them. So in Dierig's scenario the body's defense mechanism is turned against itself: instead of being consumed by the macro-

phages, the treponemes enter them and infect them, and the macrophages in turn infect the T helper cells and transport treponemes throughout the body. When a person is repeatedly exposed to syphilis—and many gay men may be exposed ten or many more times in a year—this infection process occurs again and again, further weakening the immune system. Moreover, the frequent doses of not only penicillin but also other antibiotics that many gays take for the wide array of infections to which they are prone prolong the incubation period of syphilis. All these factors, Dierig believes, contribute to a dynamic between organism and patient, which has led to the current crisis in syphilis.

Like McKenna, Dierig and Waldthaler believe that the presence of HIV in AIDS patients is an artifact of syphilis-related immunosuppression. They are convinced that a positive result on the HIV-antibody test represents infection with the dangerous late-stage syphilis they have characterized. Dierig points out that the virus was first called LAV (lymphadenopathy-associated virus) "They were getting close there," he says, "because the chronic lymphadenopathy you see in AIDS patients—around the neck, the groin, the arms—is caused by only two infectious diseases: chronic mononucleosis and syphilis."

The current situation in the United States never would have arisen, the two Germans believe, if doctors here had been treating syphilis adequately over the past twenty years. Dierig cites articles in the European literature from the early sixties warning that a major epidemic in the United States was likely unless treatment protocols were redesigned. According to Dierig, the world's finest literature on syphilis comes from the Soviet Union, where the disease has always been taken more seriously, which, Dierig thinks, explains the low incidence of AIDS behind the Iron Curtain. Dierig and Waldthaler are convinced that syphilis has been undertreated in the United States for a generation.

Penicillin works against syphilis primarily when it comes in direct contact with the treponemes while they are dividing. A widely accepted theory holds that the rate of division slows as the disease progresses, and that in late syphilis treponemes may be dividing as infrequently as once a month or even more rarely. Dierig and Waldthaler believe that even long-lasting penicillin, which stays in the system for some twenty-five

days, may not be present when needed; that the duration of treatment is as important as the dosage (in a number of European countries syphilis is treated for a year); and that the chosen form of penicillin must be able to penetrate the brain (as benzathine penicillin does not) in order to reach treponemes there.

Dierig and Waldthaler warn that although high doses of penicillin are safe for all but allergic patients, no one should attempt their method of treatment without access to emergency-room care and experience in emergency medicine. "You don't know which organ the syphilis has gone into until you start treatment," Dierig explains. "If the liver, kidney, pancreas, or lung is involved, complications come up suddenly. You have to consider the symptoms and decide in one second which organ it is and what to do—or you can lose the patient."

The two doctors are aware that many AIDS patients who try alternative therapies seem to have miraculous recoveries but that these generally prove temporary. They are proceeding cautiously before publishing their results. "Many doctors in Germany know what we are doing, and anyone can see the patients, but nobody wants to talk about it," Waldthaler says. Their contentions would be so simple to prove or disprove that it is interesting that no larger group of researchers has bothered to try. Meanwhile, the two Germans are taking a patient at a time. "We are going slow," Waldthaler says quietly, "but we are sure that we are very right."

AIDS RESEARCHERS WHO would look askance at radical theories proposed by a couple of country anesthesiologists would be nonplussed to learn that similar conclusions have been reached by one Salvatore J. Catapano, of Valley Stream, Long Island. Catapano, seventy-one, is a retired research technologist who developed a passionate interest in immunology decades before it became a hot topic in medicine. Beginning his studies thirty years ago, he learned that group of bacteria called the Enterobacteriaceae enhanced the body's immune response. Typhoid was one of the members of the group. Experimenting with hamsters in a laboratory he constructed in his basement, Catapano found that the typhoid vaccine stimulated the immune system uniquely, and could actually halt the growth of tumors. He eventually observed the same effect in a

number of cancer patients whose doctors he sometimes worked with. In 1978 Catapano approached the National Cancer Institute with his discovery. Dr. Arthur Upton, then the director of the institute and now a department chairman at the New York University School of Medicine, says, "People thought I was wasting my time talking to someone with no M.D. or other scientific credentials. But it's easy to forget, now that science is such a well-organized profession, that a century ago it was conducted by amateurs." Upton was impressed enough with Catapano's work to ask that animal studies with the vaccine be conducted for Catapano in NCI laboratories.

When Catapano first learned that AIDS patients were prone to malignancies he wondered if the vaccine might not be worth trying. The first patient he saw, in 1986, had been diagnosed as having Kaposi's sarcoma. However, to Catapano the lesion seemed "like no ordinary sarcoma." It was only after seeing other KS patients that it occurred to him that the sores resembled the syphilitic lesions he had seen on patients in the tropics. The more he reviewed AIDS symptomatology, the surer he became that AIDS was syphilis. He also conjectured that Vietnam veterans, immigrants, and gay tourists had introduced into the United States yaws, a tropical spirochetal disease whose symptoms can resemble those of secondary syphilis. Catapano, unlike most tropical-disease specialists, does not distinguish between yaws and syphilis, and believes that yaws can be sexually transmitted.

Almost everything Catapano has to say about syphilis would cause most classical syphilologists to grind their teeth. He believes, among other things, that herpes and chancroid are forms of syphilis. He is convinced that in tertiary syphilis the composition of blood is altered and the composition of semen is too, because semen is a blood product. He thinks that even without the presence of spirochetes such semen is highly infectious and can produce syphilitic symptoms in the partner of an infected person.

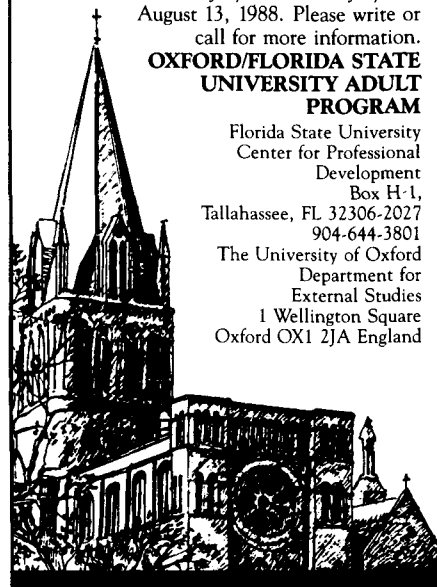
Catapano believes that no drug therapy will be effective against AIDS for long unless the immune system is stimulated by the typhoid vaccine before the administration of an antibiotic for the systemic infection. (The antibiotic is working not against treponemes per se—in Catapano's model there may be none—but rather against the opportu-

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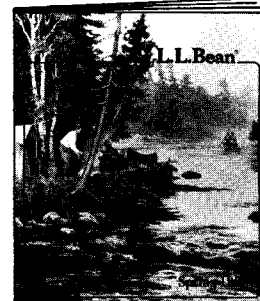
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nistic infections related to the syphilis.) Once the immune system is reactivated, Catapano thinks, a modest amount of antibiotic can resolve the symptoms of syphilis. However, like Dierig and Waldthaler, he never speaks of a cure but only of remission. He has treated seventy-odd patients, fifteen for about a year, and observed in many of them reversals of lymphadenopathy, regression of KS lesions, the resolution of chronic fevers, and dramatic weight gain. Twelve of the first fifteen patients are in remission, he says, although he adds that the study group is small and more clinical data are needed.

Like Dierig, he thinks the focus on the T helper count is "a lot of nonsense." Instead he uses a traditional test for assessing the condition of the immune system, the differential count—a tally of the different types of leukocytes, or white blood cells, which as a class are the body's defense mechanism. Catapano is most interested in the ratio between the leukocytes known as the neutrophils, which normally constitute about 60 to 70 percent of the total, and the lymphocytes, which normally constitute 25 to 30 percent. In each of Catapano's patients, following the vaccine treatment the percentage of neutrophils dropped and the percentage of lymphocytes increased. This increase is crucial, he believes, because the lymphocytes are "the chief killer cells of the immune system."

Catapano's first AIDS patient, the man suffering from Kaposi's sarcoma, had lesions covering his ankles and feet. He initially showed 72 neutrophils and 22 lymphocytes on the differential count. After eight weeks of treatment with the vaccine all but two or three of his lesions were gone and no new ones were appearing. He had 54 neutrophils and 44 lymphocytes. The patient had been participating in an ongoing review of blood tests conducted periodically on a group of AIDS patients at the Blood Center, in New York City. After six months of the vaccine treatments the patient was called into the Blood Center, because he was producing twice as many antibodies to the AIDS virus as any other patient in the study. Despite these and other similar results, Catapano says that there is as yet undetermined point of no return for any patient, either when the disease has progressed too far or when the patient has received so many drug therapies that recovery of the immune response is unlikely.

The syphilis theorists have their differences. Joan McKenna thinks that some cases of AIDS involve treponemal infection and others don't; Dierig and Waldthaler think that treponemes, or particles of them, are transmitted in all cases; Catapano thinks that infectious sera and semen that do not contain treponemes are involved in most instances. In these cases, he believes, even the most careful autopsy may show no conventional evidence of syphilis, while he allows that in cases where treponemes are involved patients may show bizarre manifestations such as the abscesses Daniel Connor found. The theorists agree on one point: we are in the midst of an unrecognized syphilis pandemic, whose most gravely infected population is composed of AIDS patients.

IT WOULD BE deliriously good news if syphilis proved to be the cause of or even the crucial co-factor in AIDS. Most physicians know nothing about the syphilis theory, and those who have heard of it are skeptical. Dr. Edmund Tramont, at Walter Reed, says, "I don't care if someone can show me that fifteen out of fifteen patients are all better unless he can say that he's given a placebo to another group of fifteen and none of them are better." He discounts the idea that AIDS is syphilis but keeps an open mind about the possibility that syphilis may contribute to clinical AIDS. "If there is something to the theory, we ought to be giving all HIV patients a course of penicillin," Tramont says. "But right now such observations are speculative. A scientific study begs to be done."

A handful of physicians on the East and West coasts who treat AIDS patients are experimentally administering high doses of penicillin. Dr. Larry Siegel, in Key West, Florida, has treated several ARC patients who also had syphilis with 40 million units of penicillin a day for twenty-one days. At six weeks to three months after treatment, they were "no better, no worse," according to Siegel, who is waiting several months to assess their serological status. Siegel is unpersuaded that the HIV virus by itself causes AIDS but would be "very surprised" if syphilis did; he still believes that aggressive treatment for syphilis may extend an AIDS patient's life.

In Palo Alto, California, Dr. Kerby Stewart, who practices family medicine, has given one AIDS patient two courses of high-dose penicillin therapy since

December of 1986. Although there was no serologic evidence that the patient had syphilis, he had a Herxheimer's reaction during the second round of treatment. When the VDRL and the FTA were recently readministered to the patient (who had remained celibate since his first treatment), the FTA had become positive, whereas the VDRL had not. The patient had two dozen lesions when he first consulted Stewart, and now he has two. For nine months he has had no new lesions, although Stewart stresses that he cannot yet attribute the improvement to penicillin. Still, he is sufficiently encouraged to have started treatment on three more patients. "Syphilis is going to turn out to be a major co-factor in immune suppression in most patients who develop symptoms of acquired immune deficiency, but I'm not prepared to say that you will find syphilis in every AIDS patient," he says. To fail to test the theory seems unwise to him. "I can't think of a single major medical advance that occurred in an atmosphere of double-blind placebo control studies with the clear support of the medical establishment behind it," he says. "Every advance has occurred with someone with some decent thinking behind their work trying something new."

The most important jury for AIDS treatments is patients. In the gay communities of San Francisco and New York phones are busy all day long as HIV-infected men exchange reports of the effectiveness of various therapies—everything from AZT to injections of shiitake mushroom extracts. The syphilis theory is only now surfacing, although *The New York Native* has for months featured statements by Dr. Stephen Caiazza, a New York doctor who has become the most vocal medical proponent of Dierig and Waldthaler's ideas. Nonetheless the new treatment for syphilis is just one of the latest to hit the grapevine on which the two most common questions are "How are you?" and "What have you tried?"

Whether AIDS proves to be the latest disguise of medicine's great masquerader or syphilis proves to be just one common, and possibly reversible, component of the mysterious syndrome, the puzzle is a clinical one, and welcome for being so. With all the failed promises of vaccines and anti-viral drugs, what the world is waiting for now is a handful of recoveries that last.

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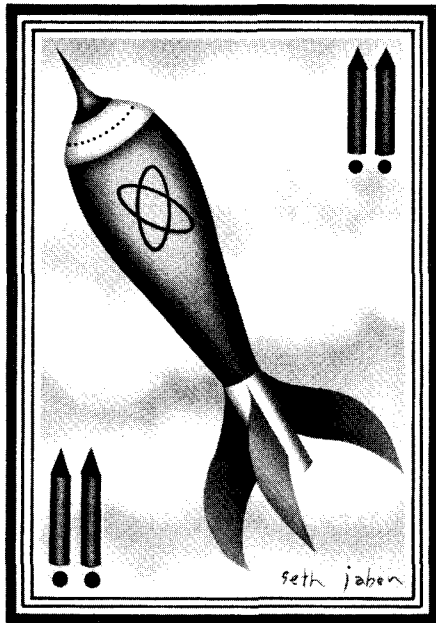
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WASHINGTON NUCLEAR MISSIONS

Plans for reactors to power SDI weapons systems have gone further than the drawing board, despite unresolved questions about practicality and safety

FOR MORE THAN three decades military and civilian scientists have been looking for new ways to put the atom to use in powering rockets and satellites. Many of the projects—including large reactors to power weather satellites, commercial satellites, and an orbiting space station—never made it past the drawing board, in part because of concerns about safety. The United States and the Soviet Union have launched about fifty nuclear-powered satellites, but only the Soviets have regularly fueled theirs with reactors. The United States, except for one ill-fated mission, in 1965, has depended on less grandiose power sources called radio-isotope thermo-electric generators, which produce heat not from fissioning atoms but from the decaying of radioactive materials. These generators propelled the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's probes into deep space, where solar power was not an option.

But congressional interest in exploring deep space waned in the late 1960s, and neither NASA nor the Department of Energy (DOE) wanted to pump its scant

research dollars into what might turn out to be a void. NASA eventually chose solar panels for its planned space station. By the early 1970s proponents of high-powered reactors were settling in for a long funding drought.

Then, in March of 1983, President Ronald Reagan called for the Strategic Defense Initiative, or Star Wars research. Although Reagan has consistently tried to portray the system as non-nuclear, in reality crucial elements of SDI may involve nuclear power, if not weaponry. Indeed, with little fanfare, military planners are rushing ahead with the development of large nuclear reactors to power key elements of SDI. Some people are wondering whether such reactors will pose a serious threat to our health and safety—even if a Star Wars system is only deployed and never used.

The Administration is already pouring millions of dollars into the development of high-powered space-based reactors to supply the tremendous amounts of energy that laser weapons and their supporting systems would need. Military planners prefer reactors to solar panels, because they are more “hardened” and therefore would be better able to withstand a space battle. Testifying before Congress in October of 1985, James W. Vaughan, Jr., then DOE's acting assistant secretary for nuclear energy, made clear that military applications are driving the current research. “I think if it were not for [SDI], we would be hard pressed to have a sufficient number of defined missions to sustain [research] at the levels we're talking about today.”

Although DOE and NASA are participating in the current research effort, the Department of Defense (DOD) is the real moving force behind it. It will be the major, if not the sole, customer for space-based reactors. Of course, the program has garnered strong support from outside reactor contractors, who are searching for any kind of business to replace the decimated civilian power-reactor industry. DOD slated \$36.5 million for a reactor called the SP-100 last year, while DOE appropriations totaled \$27.6 million. Sinking a chunk of DOE's nuclear-reactor research funding into space-based reactors seems at best a curious decision, coming as it does at a time when the Chernobyl nuclear accident has raised serious questions about reactor safety. Some DOE observers think that the agency's resources would be better spent trying to improve ground-based commercial reactors.

THE LINCHPIN OF the current research is the SP-100, which the military hopes to test in flight by the mid-1990s. At a development cost of at least \$700 million before a prototype is even built, the reactor will produce 100 kilowatts of electric power—enough power to light 1,000 100-watt light-bulbs, and many times more than anything the United States has yet put in space. The SP-100 will eventually be dwarfed by multi-megawatt reactors whose designs, though under way, are still in the embryonic stage.

The SP-100, based on a design by General Electric, will not be able to power a laser weapon. Instead it will supply energy for maintenance and standby systems such as communications satellites, which will be linked to a Star Wars network. The reactor must be small enough to fit into the cargo bay of the space shuttle, with room left for the satellite it will power. These size constraints will make it the hottest reactor ever built, operating at temperatures near 2,000° Fahrenheit. Since the size of the cooling system must be limited, it will radiate off much of its waste heat, a feat best accomplished by running at high temperatures. The Soviet reactors used to power ocean-surveillance satellites run at lower temperatures but generate a fraction of the power projected for the SP-100.

Critics of the reactor program say that the SP-100 relies on so many kinds of new technology that a malfunction, and possibly even an accident, cannot be ruled out. Partly to enable the reactor to run at such high temperatures, it will be built of special metals—probably including beryllium, which is highly toxic. A special radiator will be needed to move the coolant through the reactor in zero gravity, using a thermo-electromagnetic, rather than a mechanical, pump. Strong refractory metals will be needed to contain the primary coolant, which will have to start up from a frozen state. And the reactor will be the first to use uranium nitride as its fuel. Moreover, all the systems supporting the reactor, bombarded by radiation and temperatures ranging from extremely cold to extremely hot, will have to work flawlessly, because there will be no maintenance during the reactor's seven-year active life-span.

At the end of its life-span the SP-100 will have generated long-lived fission products equivalent to those of ten Hiroshima-size bombs, according to the

Committee to Bridge the Gap (CBG), a public-interest group in Los Angeles that is studying the space-reactor projects. The Soviet reactors churn out just a fraction of that amount over their three-month life-spans. However, if the SP-100 reactor crashes before its dangerous fuel becomes harmless (which will take at least 300 years), and if radioactive materials are released, the accident could cause thousands of cancers; if it landed in a highly populated area, it could cause numerous deaths.

The record of past nuclear space missions is not encouraging to those worried about the safety of space-based reactors. Of the fifty, nine, or nearly a fifth, have ended in failure and some have skirted catastrophe. In 1964 a U.S. navigational satellite failed to reach its designated orbit and plummeted back to earth. Its power source contained about 17,000 curies of plutonium-238, one of the most toxic substances in existence. The plutonium dispersed into the atmosphere, tripling the amount of Pu-238 already present in the environment owing to atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. In 1978 and 1983 two Soviet nuclear-powered satellites re-entered the atmosphere. Their reactors are believed to have burned up, releasing thousands of curies of radioactivity. "So far, the debate over SDI has been over the strategic issues," says Steve Aftergood, an engineer and the executive director of CBG. "But the dramatic failures in both the U.S. and Soviet programs make the current efforts an issue of safety and public acceptance of SDI technology."

One estimate of the dangers inherent in launching nuclear materials lies in an unreleased 1979 DOE study. According to the study, if a reactor approximately the size of the SP-100 re-entered the earth's atmosphere after operating for a year, and disintegrated, the fallout could cause as many as 50,000 fatal cancers. The hypothetical re-entry scenario mirrors what happened in January of 1978, when the Soviet *Cosmos 954* fell prematurely back to earth, scattering radioactive debris over a broad area in northwest Canada.

While DOE isn't ignoring the risks, it is doing its best to minimize the dangers publicly and pre-empt critics before Congress starts asking sticky questions. Carl Wahlquist, DOE's program director for the SP-100's ground engineering system, concedes that the SP-100 program faces "many technical problems" but says that his department has concluded

that all the technologies are feasible and that "it's just a question of engineering." Because the reactor will not be activated until it reaches orbit, an accident during a launch would release very little radioactivity. Once in space, the reactor will follow an orbit said to be high enough to ensure that by the time the reactor re-enters the atmosphere, its level of radioactivity will be very low. Any reactors in lower orbits will be boosted higher by rockets once their missions are completed, in order to ensure safe decay.

Regardless of Wahlquist's assurances, a launch accident could cause the reactor to reach "uncontrolled supercriticality," in which an almost instantaneous surge in power would destroy the reactor. Aftergood wrote in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, "Preliminary studies determined that flooding the SP-100 reactor core with water and increasing the space between fuel rods (which might occur upon crash landing in a body of water) would make the reactor supercritical even with the internal control rods in place." An Air Force researcher concluded that "avoidance of launch pad accidents that will produce a supercritical reactor is a very near impossible task. . . . In fact, it may not be possible to preclude a supercritical excursion on the launch pad." As the *Challenger* explosion demonstrated, launch-pad accidents happen. It is true that such an accident would release relatively small amounts of radioactivity into the biosphere. The greatest threat might be from the dispersal of the beryllium.

Not so if the reactor returned to earth prematurely after, say, ten years in orbit. Objects orbiting in space can't just drop from the sky; their orbits decay slowly as gravity draws them closer to the earth. Upon this fact of physics rests Wahlquist's and others' firm belief that putting the reactor into an orbit high enough will ensure that it will be harmless when it returns to earth. Unfortunately, satellites can be struck by space debris and dislodged from their orbits. Indeed, when a booster failed to lift *Cosmos 954* into a higher orbit, some Soviet scientists suggested that the failure, which led to the satellite's re-entry and break-up, might have been caused by just such a collision.

SOME EXPERTS SAY that SDI could do without the SP-100. According to John Pike, of the Federation of American Scientists, DOD is already reducing its power requirements for reactors. At

first, Pike says, SP-100-size reactors were envisioned as energy sources for systems such as space-based radars, and multi-megawatt reactors were expected to furnish the tremendous pulse power needed to generate laser beams. Now, however, the chief military use for the SP-100 appears to be in the space surveillance and tracking system, intended to track warheads. And the space-based lasers for which the multi-megawatt reactors were intended—excimer lasers, rail-guns, and particle-beam generators—are currently out of favor, because they seem more vulnerable than ground-based free-electron lasers would be. Pike says that the surveillance and tracking system will run on far less power than a large radar needs, and could draw enough energy from a system under development called the dynamic-isotope power system. Pike wonders whether "the SP-100 is being developed for the military or is a jobs program for the same people who like to fool around with high-temperature reactors."

Though the inherently tougher ("harder") design of any nuclear reactor is one reason the military favors nuclear over solar power, the design of the SP-100 does not meet all military survivability criteria. Because meeting those criteria would make the reactor heavier, harder to launch, and more expensive, they are currently only "enhancement options," which the military might add later. The history of projects changed in mid-course does not bode well for the U.S. Treasury.

Whether the program exists just to satisfy a few nuclear engineers is debatable. What does seem clear, however, is that it is moving forward with relatively little outside scrutiny, particularly from Congress—as has happened with many military programs that have turned into boondoggles. This lack of interest in an orbiting reactor could be dangerous. In 1986 there were 3,000 mishaps at the more than 100 U.S. commercial nuclear reactors; of these nearly 700 were emergency shutdowns, or scrams. These reactors pose such dangers to the public because for twenty years the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Congress were lax with the nuclear-power industry. Critics of the SP-100 program worry that the military will hurl reactors into space before the public and Congress can judge whether it is prudent to have radioactive cores circling the globe.

—Jonathan Tasini



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*The city is experiencing rapid growth
and big problems, and—ever the trendsetter—dealing
with both in ways that every urban area in the country can learn from*

LOS ANGELES COMES OF AGE

BY CHARLES LOCKWOOD AND CHRISTOPHER B. LEINBERGER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX WEBB



IN THE GARMENT DISTRICT, DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES CONJURES UP A MYRIAD OF IMAGES: A city dominated by show business, where businessmen take meetings beside swimming pools and don't wear ties to the office; a palm-shaded city where blond young men surf their days away at the beach; a city of transplanted midwesterners who ignore the threat of the next earthquake; an intellectually and culturally vapid city where many residents worship rampant materialism while others pursue various forms of self-realization with equally intense preoccupation; a city with no downtown—a sprawling amoeba of unending stretches of suburban tract houses, connected by more freeways than exist anywhere else in America.

Whatever their suitability for jokes on late-night talk shows, these images of Los Angeles no longer tell anything like the whole story. Within the past decade greater Los Angeles has undergone economic, social, political, and cultural upheavals deeper and broader than those experienced by any other large American city during the same period.

Once a prosperous but provincial regional metropolis, greater Los Angeles has become America's true "second city"—second only to New York in economic power and cultural influence. And Los Angeles rivals New York in attracting ambitious people who want to make it, in almost every professional endeavor and field of business. If pres-

ent trends continue, and if certain nagging problems don't overwhelm the metropolitan area, Los Angeles might even emerge as the Western Hemisphere's leading city in the early twenty-first century.

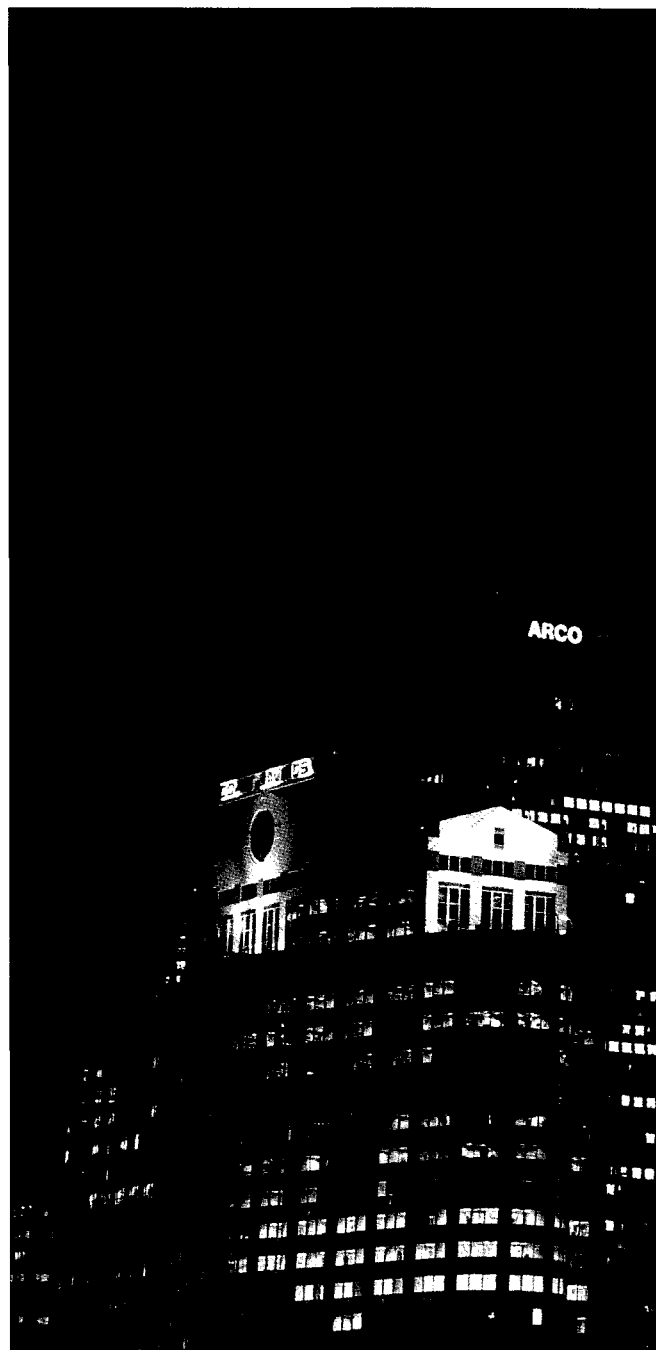
Greater Los Angeles, a national trendsetter in popular entertainment, life-styles, and speech, has been wrestling with economic and social issues that are only now beginning to challenge other American metropolitan areas. These issues include how and where Americans will work and live, racial and ethnic integration when Anglos (non-Hispanic whites) are a minority, and which of many groups will assume leadership in the arts and culture. Los Angeles also presents large-scale versions of now widespread urban challenges such as traffic, air quality, waste management, public education, and regional government. To visitors and Angelenos alike, it seems that what many once considered to be an earthly paradise is environmentally befouled and increasingly unlivable.

The city's leadership and most residents of the metropolitan area recognize that these are regional issues, which don't disappear at the city or county line, and this is the first step toward resolving them. In this regard, greater Los Angeles is far ahead of most other American metropolitan areas, and therefore provides a role model for other urbanized regions. Yet, ironically, Los Angeles is one city most Americans do not want their home town to emulate.

The Los Angeles area is even in the forefront of redefining the urban vocabulary, to describe itself and other metropolitan areas. Words like *city* and *suburb* are becoming meaningless in Los Angeles, because they imply a metropolitan area that has followed the traditional development pattern, in which a dominant high-density business center is surrounded by a dependent and mostly residential low-density periphery. Searching for a more appropriate urban terminology, some of Southern California's urban experts now describe Los Angeles as a series of "constellations" forming the metropolitan "galaxy."

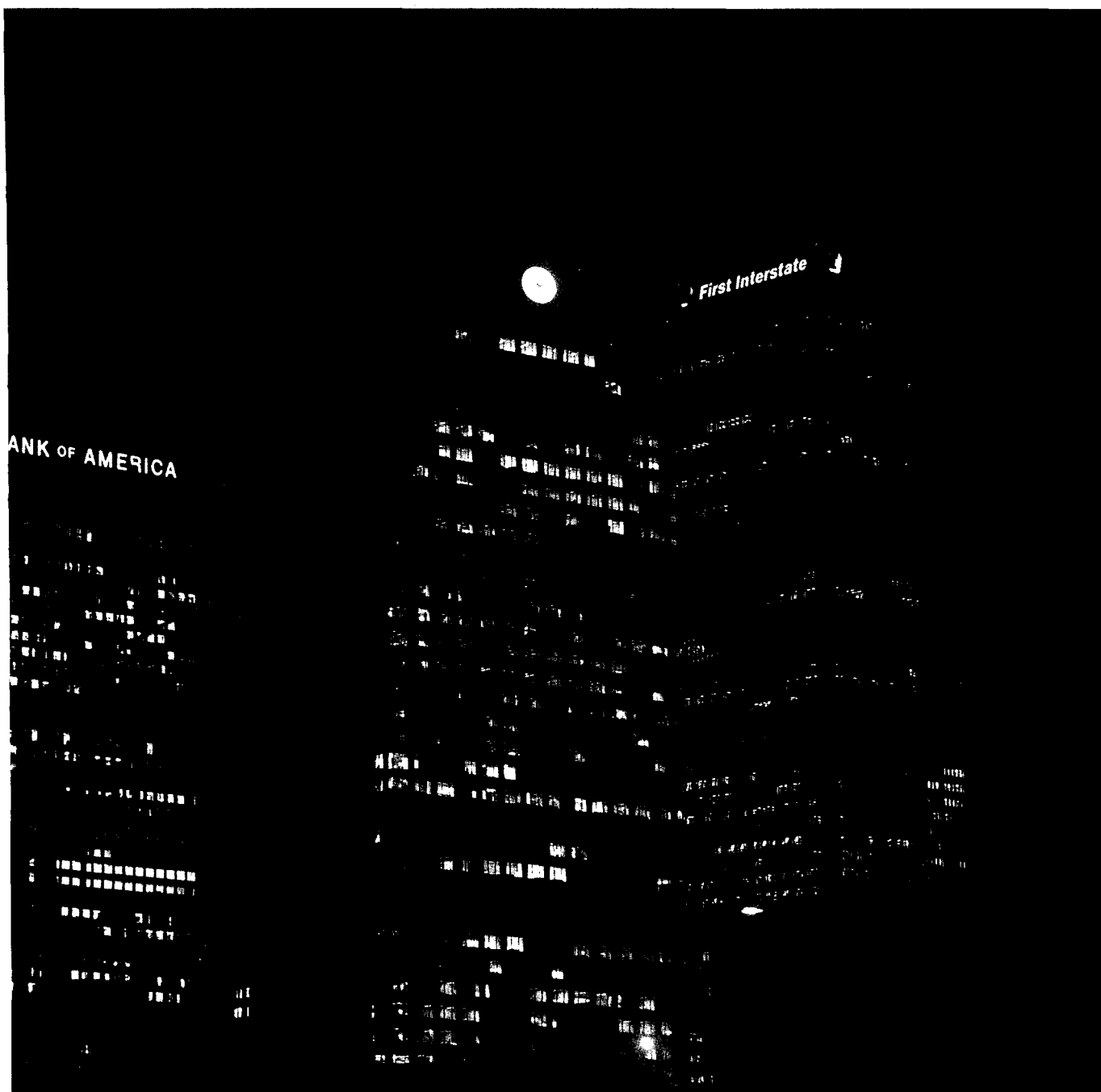
Although these terms reflect the new thought processes and the beginnings of a lexicon of the kind needed to comprehend not only Los Angeles but also other metropolitan

THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT AT NIGHT (RIGHT) AND THOSE WHO WORK THERE BY DAY (BELOW)



areas, this article will use a more familiar vocabulary. Except where specifically describing the city or county of Los Angeles as a political jurisdiction, the terms *Los Angeles* and *greater Los Angeles* will refer to the Census Bureau's Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes the urbanized portions of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. This is also referred to as the *metropolitan area*.

The city of Los Angeles contains only 25 percent of the metropolitan area's population of 12.6 million, and its 461 square miles make up only 11 percent of the metropolitan area. Yet the city of Los Angeles constitutes an incredibly diverse urban fabric, including downtown skyscrapers, the black ghetto of Watts, the sprawling East Los Angeles bar



rio, the estates of Bel-Air, and the vast and largely middle-class San Fernando Valley, which has a population greater than the city of Dallas.

Soon to Be a Major Everything

THE CHANGING SIZE AND FORM OF LOS ANGELES SET it apart from any other American city, and so does its economy. The 4,100-square-mile metropolitan area, already one of the largest in the world, is rapidly expanding. The direction of the growth is dictated by geography and also politics. The Pacific Ocean forms the city's western boundary. The San Gabriel Mountains, whose peaks reach 10,000 feet, impede but do not completely

block growth to the north. To the northwest, Ventura County, where development in the San Fernando Valley will logically extend, has established "slow growth" limits. Greater Los Angeles, then, is expanding southeast, into Orange County, and even more rapidly eastward, into the less expensive and less congested San Bernardino and Riverside counties, more than sixty miles from downtown Los Angeles.

The metropolitan area, furthermore, is coalescing into approximately eighteen "urban village" cores, which are business, retail, housing, and entertainment focal points in the low-density cityscape. Some of these cores—like Pasadena and Westwood—are decades-old communities that have grown into regional hubs. Others—like the Los

Angeles International Airport, Costa Mesa/Irvine/Newport Beach, and Ontario—have seemingly emerged out of bean fields or suburban sprawl.

The metropolitan area's largest urban-village core is, of course, downtown Los Angeles, which finally gained a big-city skyline during the recent office-building boom. After almost dying in the 1950s and 1960s, at least in the perception of the city's widely dispersed middle-class Anglos, downtown has regained some upscale shops, stylish apartments and condominiums, fashionable hotels, English-language movie theaters, and cultural institutions, like the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Los Angeles Theatre Center.

All these new office buildings, shops, apartments, and attractions, however, are only a small part of downtown Los Angeles. Downtown is a microcosm of greater Los Angeles, and totally different worlds exist in one block. Within its four and a half square miles, downtown has a Hispanic shopping district along Broadway that is the busiest city shopping district west of Chicago, a civic center with one of the largest concentrations of government offices outside Washington, D.C., a Chinatown, a Little Tokyo, a busy Skid Row, a fledgling Soho-like artists' district, one of the largest garment districts in the country, and a wholesale flower market.

Despite its recent construction boom, downtown Los Angeles cannot claim the symbolic value to its metropolitan area that traditional downtowns, like those of Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco, have. With just four percent of greater Los Angeles's jobs, it is not the metropolitan region's functional hub. Moreover, it has few historical landmarks, well-established museums or cultural institutions, revered churches or synagogues, or appealing public squares or promenades that would attract people on lunch hours or weekends.

The reason for this lack of historical and cultural attractions goes back to the founding of Los Angeles, two hundred years ago. In a semi-arid region, the city was established next to the only stretch of the Los Angeles River where water flowed year-round. Now more than 90 percent of the region's water supply is imported and the Los Angeles River is a dry concrete ditch nine months of the year, used for training bus drivers. The only practical reasons for the location of downtown are the freeway system and inertia.

THE METROPOLITAN AREA'S GREAT EXPANSION AND the revival of downtown reflect the local economy's rapid growth and the area's emergence as a major business center. Last year greater Los Angeles produced \$250 billion worth of goods and services, making the 12.6-million-person metropolitan area the world's eleventh largest "nation" in terms of gross national product, ahead of Australia, India, and Switzerland. The Southern California Association of Governments published employment projections in August of 1986 indicating that the



DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT COMPANY, LONG BEACH

area's gross regional product will increase sharply in the coming years. The number of jobs is expected to jump from 5.9 million in 1984 to 8.0 million in 2000.

In recent years the Los Angeles economy has been remarkably recession-proof, because of its diversified base, including aerospace, entertainment, finance, manufacturing, government, health care, insurance, international trade, oil extraction and refining, real estate, tourism, and wholesale and retail trade. The metropolitan economy is so large that its individual components are enormous in their own right. Who would suspect that greater Los Angeles is the nation's largest manufacturing location, in terms of the value of goods produced? Or that it boasts greater absolute retail sales than the New York City metropolitan area, with its population of 18 million?

Contrary to what many Americans still believe, Hollywood plays only a small role in the Los Angeles economy. Motion-picture and television production directly employs approximately 75,000 people in Los Angeles County, where the vast majority of such jobs are located, but these jobs translate into just 1.4 percent of the region's total employment. Additional jobs, in areas like catering, hair-dressing, and carpentry, depend in some way on motion-picture and television production. But even taking into account this indirect and usually part-time employment, Hollywood provides only seven percent of the metropolitan area's jobs.

Hollywood's importance in the regional economy will decline in coming years. Although Los Angeles is still the national center for movie and television production and distribution, it is no longer the unchallenged shooting location. More than a third of the feature films produced in the United States in recent years have been filmed outside California. In 1984 no major Academy Awards were given to movies shot in Los Angeles. The main beneficiaries of this "runaway production" are states—like New York, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, and Illinois—that advertise their advantages in the entertainment "trades" and on the billboards looming over the Sunset Strip.

The role that finance plays in the economy is less glamorous but far more important than Hollywood's. A decade

ago Los Angeles surpassed San Francisco as the West Coast's financial center. In 1986 Los Angeles surpassed Chicago in banking deposits. Los Angeles's \$130 billion worth of deposits in mid-1985, including savings-and-loan deposits, ranked second nationally only to New York's \$175 billion. And the Los Angeles deposit totals have been rising rapidly, growing from \$75 billion since 1980, while New York's have declined slightly.

The world's leading banks, naturally, are eager to take advantage of the growing Los Angeles market. In 1986, 173 non-California banks, 126 of them foreign, maintained offices in Los Angeles. In 1986 Citicorp and Chase Manhattan completed high-rise buildings in downtown Los Angeles. In 1991 for the first time California will allow East Coast and Midwest banks to offer all-service banking in the state, thus creating more competition.

Like finance, manufacturing is a major—and growing—part of the economy. Greater Los Angeles is, for example, the largest aerospace center in the world. Lockheed, Northrop, Rockwell International, and TRW all have their most significant office, engineering, and manufacturing operations in the area. Aerospace, however, provides only 7.7 percent of the region's employment.

Although greater Los Angeles has only one automobile-assembly plant, it is the Detroit of the West. Eight of the nine Japanese car companies, plus Hyundai, of South Korea, have their U.S. headquarters in the metropolitan region. And because Southern California is America's trend-setting automobile market, Detroit's Big Three have opened design centers in Los Angeles so that they can catch the latest trends.

Metropolitan Los Angeles—not Silicon Valley—has the greatest concentration of high-tech industries, mathematicians, scientists, engineers, and skilled technicians in the United States. The region's high-tech output consists of sophisticated military and space communications equipment, electronics components, missiles and space vehicles, and office and computing machinery. Over the next decade, according to a study by the DeVry Institute of Technology, Los Angeles will lead the nation's major cities in adding new high-tech jobs.

Overall, manufacturing provides 22 percent of local jobs. Although manufacturing is expected to play a declining role in the nationwide economy during the next fifteen to twenty years (Peter Drucker, the author and business authority, has said that by the year 2000 the number of people holding jobs in manufacturing will have dropped from 20 percent to 10 percent of the national work force), it is expected to be greater Los Angeles's third largest sector in 2010, gaining 300,000 new jobs by then and providing nearly 20 percent of employment at that date.

Aside from the enormous size of the local market, one reason for Los Angeles's continued strength in manufacturing is its ability to combine First World management, talent, and location with Third World labor, provided by recent arrivals from Latin America and Asia. Without this plentiful cheap labor Los Angeles would lose much of its

garment and furniture manufacturing and distribution industries to lower-cost locations.

Some Los Angeles factories can even undersell Third World manufacturers. Last year a UCLA professor interested in labor conditions asked to be taken on a tour of factories in the industrial area near downtown Los Angeles, and his request was granted on condition that he be blindfolded. When the blindfold was removed, the professor found himself standing inside a large factory building with blacked-out windows. Dozens of Hispanic and Asian workers were manufacturing the steel wheels on which automobiles' tires are mounted. The workers' only protection against dust and airborne metal particles was cloth bandannas over their mouths and noses. The greatest shock for the professor was not the sweatshop working conditions or the apparent immigration and pollution violations but the label attached to each wheel at the end of production. It read MADE IN BRAZIL. The goods were headed for Detroit.

With no single industry dominating the economy, the area's prosperity does not depend on a handful of companies. Nor is it likely that most key industries would decline simultaneously. If aerospace should find the defense budget cut drastically in 1989 after a new Administration takes power, oil might recover. If movie and television production accelerates its flight from Southern California, high technology might become stronger.

But nearly all large Los Angeles industries have characteristics in common, which few industries elsewhere have shared until recently. They are either highly cyclical (oil and tourism) or project-oriented (entertainment), or both (aerospace and real-estate development). Companies based in Los Angeles have thus long been at the front lines of competitiveness in the business world.

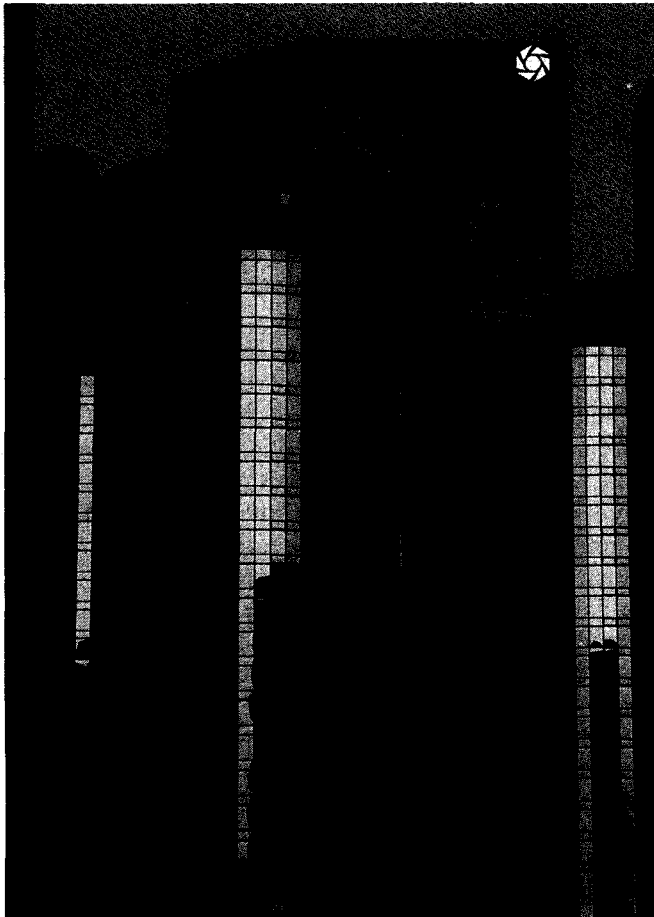
An aerospace company, which is dependent on government contracts, may receive a telephone call on Friday with the news that Congress has killed a missile project. The survival of the company depends on its ability to lay off the thousands of employees working on that project by the following Monday. Or the opposite might happen, and then the company must quickly gear up for a project. This

CATALINA SWIMWEAR MANUFACTURING PLANT, FULLERTON



corporate nimbleness at reacting to external circumstances has imbued the aerospace work force with a somewhat cavalier attitude toward change. Very few aerospace employees, except possibly for top management, have been at Lockheed, McDonnell Douglas, or Northrop for their entire careers. Job-hopping is not only acceptable in Los Angeles aerospace circles, it is essential.

The same ups and downs affect the entertainment industry—or, as they have always said in Hollywood, “You’re only as good as your last picture.” Paramount’s recent good fortune, after a decade in the doldrums, can be credited to such box-office hits as *Top Gun*, *Beverly Hills Cop*, and *Crocodile Dundee*. One or two bombs can have the opposite



THE WESTIN BONAVENTURE HOTEL AND CROCKER CENTER

effect, as the \$41 million *Heaven's Gate* debacle, which destroyed United Artists, showed. An entertainment job means uncertainty. More than 90 percent of entertainment-industry employees are daily or weekly workers, and they typically work only eight to ten months a year.

Los Angeles, moreover, is a city of entrepreneurs, from the founders of high-tech companies to modern-day snake-oil salesmen, from real-estate developers to the bosses in a fast-growing pornography industry. Even the 1984 Olympics were a typically Los Angeles entrepreneurial effort. For the first time the Olympics were not sponsored by a government entity. Instead, a private group named the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee

was in charge. It created the most profitable—and, one might add, the showiest—Olympics in history. On revenues of \$650 million the group reaped a staggering 33 percent profit, of \$215 million. This success contrasts with the outcome of the Montreal Games, which cost \$3.3 billion, saddled the city with an enormous debt, and nearly killed the modern Olympics.

If someone is not an entrepreneur in the classic sense, he is likely to be a consultant. Greater Los Angeles has more self-employed people than any other city in the nation, in part because the metropolitan region's project-oriented companies need a vast network of consultants and subcontractors that they can hire or fire as their business cycles dictate. These consultants are financial planners, screenwriters, attorneys, real-estate experts, interior designers, and high-tech whizzes. Because many members of this consultant subculture work at home, Los Angeles provides a laboratory for the rest of the nation to study the impact of telecommuting and home offices on individuals, families, and companies.

One result of the office-at-home phenomenon is already clear: the metropolitan area does not have as much office space as would be expected for a city of its size and wealth. Most major metropolitan areas have at least twenty square feet of office space per person. In greater New York, the bastion of the organization man, the figure is twenty-eight square feet. In greater Los Angeles the figure is a mere fifteen square feet.

The entrepreneurial risk-taking ethic, although it enables Los Angeles businesses to give rise to the newest technology or take advantage of the latest trend in the competitive world economy, has a potential downside. According to a well-known business axiom, the entrepreneurs who excel at company start-ups rarely have the temperament to run more mature organizations successfully. The very skills of the entrepreneurial lone wolf—the decisiveness, the single-mindedness in the face of whatever opposition there is, and the quick reaction to new opportunities—can be inappropriate to the management of large, slower-growing companies, as H. Ross Perot recently demonstrated at General Motors.

Quite possibly, the talents and business values that have propelled the Los Angeles economy to its current prosperity may be the reason that only seventeen of the Fortune 500 industrial companies, fourteen of the Fortune 500 service firms, and eighteen of the Fortune 100 diversified financial institutions (mostly savings-and-loans) have built their headquarters in the metropolitan area. Put another way, Los Angeles generates six percent of the gross national product with five percent of the population, but only four percent of the sales revenues of the Fortune 500 companies whose headquarters are in Los Angeles. Los Angeles may have the nation's most vibrant regional economy, as recent studies have claimed, but most national corporations still have just a branch office there, albeit probably the largest one in the organization.

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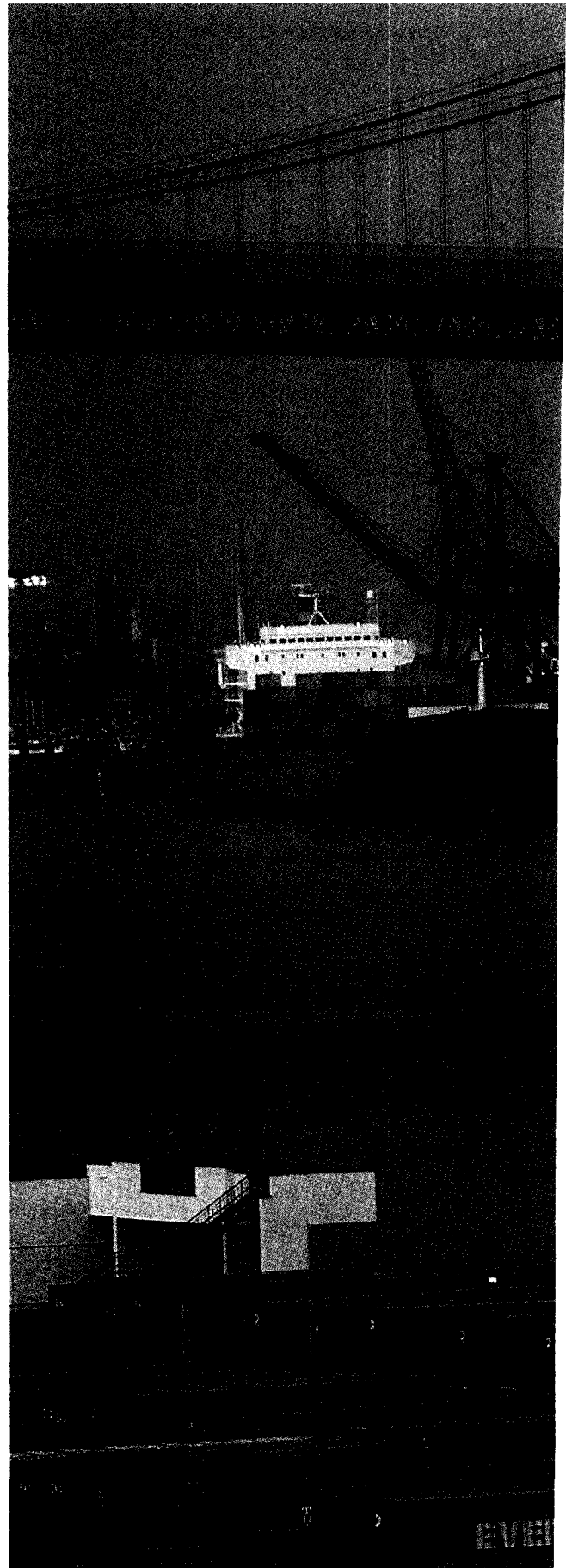
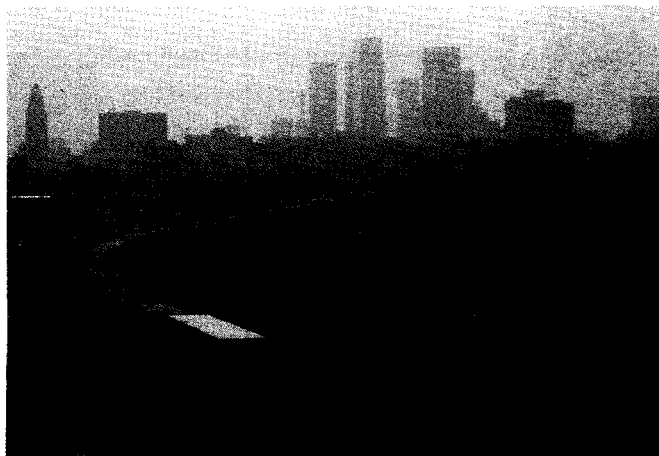
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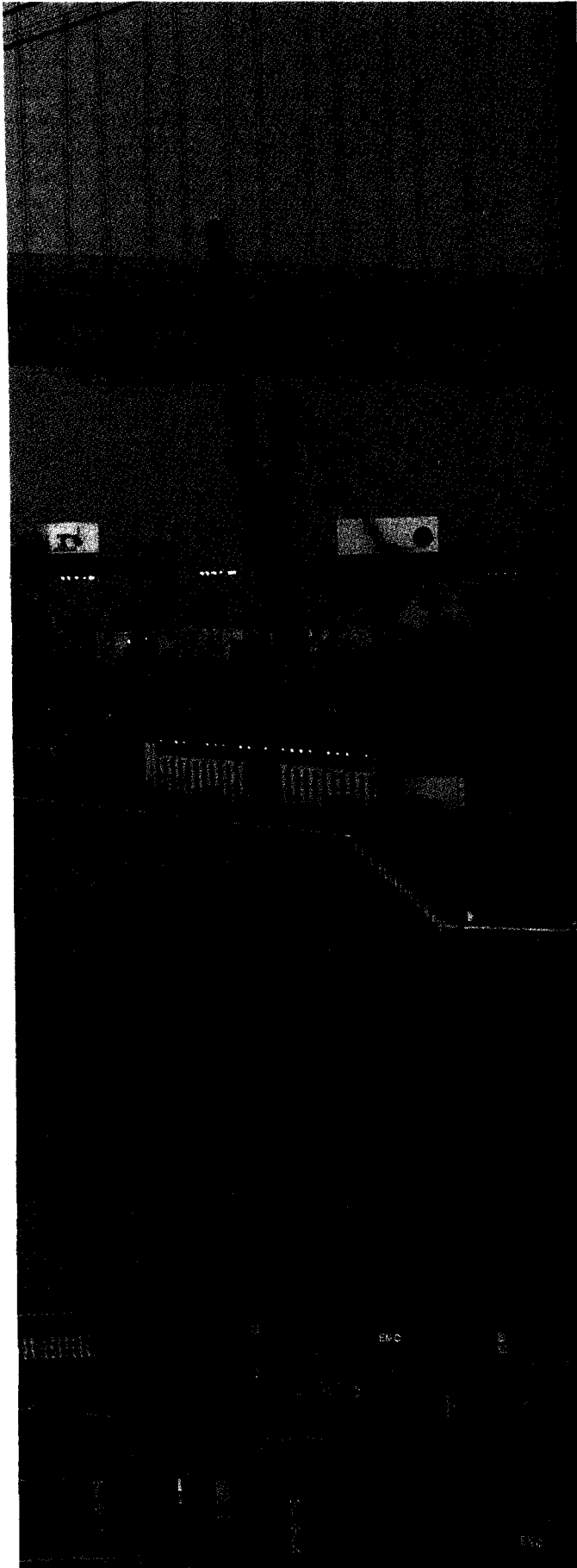
middle-size Los Angeles companies represents the opportunity to establish a foothold in the Southern California market and gain forward-thinking executive talent. And Los Angeles offers plenty of businesses for sale. An entrepreneur can take a company only so far before it needs additional capital to expand. Or the founder may want to cash out. Or the company may hit the downside of the cycle or may lose a major project and run into financial difficulties. The Douglas Aircraft Company, of Long Beach, ran into cyclical financial difficulties and sold out to McDonnell Aircraft Corporation, of St. Louis, in 1967. Los Angeles's Stuart family sold its interest in Carnation, to the Swiss-based Nestlé, in 1985. Last year the locally based airlines Pacific Southwest, Western, and AirCal were taken over by USAir Group, of Washington, D.C.; Delta, of Atlanta; and American, of Dallas, respectively.

Will the Los Angeles-based companies that have been acquired by out-of-town corporations grow faster and, perhaps, attract distant headquarters to Southern California? This is what happened after the Atlantic and Richfield merger that created Arco. Rockwell International has incrementally moved its headquarters to Los Angeles from Pittsburgh, now that the majority of its manufacturing capacity is in Southern California. Or will these acquisitions lead to the loss of local jobs, influential executives, and community support to the distant headquarters city? Such a drain has taken place in San Francisco, which has lost half its major companies through mergers or restructuring since 1979.

A related problem has to do with who will own and run the Los Angeles of the future. A tangible symbol of Los Angeles's economic might—its gleaming new downtown skyline—has already passed out of local control. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, 75 percent of the large downtown office buildings are foreign-owned or -controlled, up from 25 percent just eight years ago. At their offices in these foreign-owned buildings some Los Angeles banking executives worry that financial institutions based in New York and Tokyo may someday dominate the local market. Already branches of Wall Street firms like First Boston and Morgan Stanley have become Southern California's lead-

SPRING STREET YARD, SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD





BERTHS IN LOS ANGELES HARBOR (LEFT) AND A FLEET OF IMPORTED NISSANS (ABOVE)

ing investment banks. Similarly, long-established Los Angeles attorneys fear that an influx of New York law firms now under way will take away some of their business, because the New Yorkers offer the prestige of a national outfit and have already worked with the banks and corporations that have recently opened offices in Los Angeles. By 1987 about forty New York law firms had opened offices in Los Angeles. Most had arrived within the preceding few years; many had come to Los Angeles within the preceding year.

Trade is another activity that is both bringing prosperity to greater Los Angeles's economy and putting outsiders in charge of large parts of the city. The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, which sit side by side on San Pedro Bay but are run separately by the two municipalities, together form the fastest-growing major cargo center in the world. The value of its total import-export oceanborne cargo jumped from \$35.4 billion in 1983 to \$56.2 billion in 1985 and \$61.8 billion in 1986, easily surpassing the Port of New York and New Jersey's \$49.9 billion for 1986. The rise in value of the international trade passing through the Los Angeles customs district, which includes Los Angeles International Airport, is even more impressive: from \$21.7 billion in 1975 (using 1985 dollars) to \$63.8 billion in 1985. This far outstrips New York's growth from \$62.4 billion in 1975 (using 1985 dollars) to \$90.4 billion in 1985.

The Los Angeles-Long Beach area has recently become the nation's largest port, primarily because it is the trade gateway to the American market for the Pacific Rim nations—and America's gateway to the Pacific Rim market as well. Already U.S. trade with the Pacific Rim countries is 30 percent greater than U.S. trade with the Atlantic Basin countries, and 60 percent of U.S. trade from the Pacific Rim enters the United States through Los Angeles's two ports and its international airport.

There could not be a more propitious moment for Los Angeles to affirm its role as gateway, because Asia now boasts the world's fastest-growing economies. With 43 percent of the world's population, the Pacific Rim's twenty-seven nations (excluding the Soviet Union) are projected

to account for 27 percent of the gross world product by 1995, up from 24 percent in 1980 and 21 percent in 1970, according to a California Department of Commerce report. The combined GNP of the Pacific Rim countries is growing at the astonishing rate of \$3 billion a *week*.

Foreign trade, which is now responsible for one in ten jobs in greater Los Angeles (the figure may reach one in six by 1995), is reshaping parts of the Los Angeles cityscape. Ten years ago downtown Long Beach was a virtual slum. Most white-collar jobs and middle-class shops had moved out. The downtown consisted of several new office towers and vacant lots from a failed 1960s clearance-style urban-renewal project, half-empty and run-down 1920s office

greater role in the metropolitan area's economy, through their investments in manufacturing and trade as well as in real-estate development. Many of these Asian investors prefer Los Angeles to other parts of the United States, because they have already made business deals here and feel comfortable with the area's substantial Asian population, business networks, and social institutions. These Asian corporations and businessmen are formidable investors and business competitors. They are oriented toward the long term more than Americans are and, therefore, are willing to pay more for an asset, whether it is a company, a manufacturing plant, or a building. For instance, Japanese investors require only a six or seven percent first-year re-



GAS STATION, KOREATOWN

buildings, parking lots, retirement hotels, pawn shops, and theaters specializing in X-rated movies. Today more than \$2 billion worth of construction is under way in or planned for downtown Long Beach, which, because of its proximity to the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, is becoming an urban-village core focused on foreign trade. Near the *Queen Mary* tourist area, for instance, will be the World Trade Center, a 2.2-million-square-foot office, hotel, and retail complex. In an increasingly common kind of deal, the joint-venture partners are IDM, the largest Long Beach-based office developer, and Kajima, the largest Japanese construction firm.

Asian corporations and businessmen are playing an ever

turn on a real-estate investment, as compared with nine or ten percent demanded by most American investors.

The impact of this foreign investment and trade—in combination with the metropolitan area's huge gross regional product, rising financial might, and fast-growing population—is raising expectations that Los Angeles will soon be more than the West Coast's business and financial center. Many bankers and civic leaders expect Los Angeles to become a leading world financial center, in a league with New York, London, and Tokyo. Some even suggest that Los Angeles might become the world's financial capital, linking the mature American and Western European economies with the ascendant Pacific Rim ones.

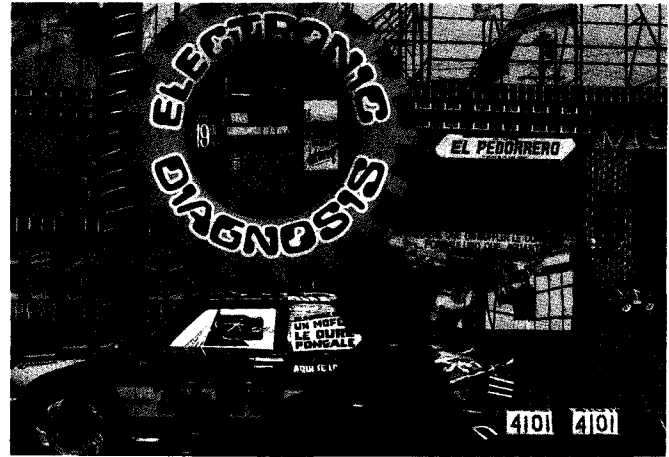
America's First "Third World City"

THE POPULATION OF GREATER LOS ANGELES IS ALSO growing and diversifying. Now 12.6 million, the population is projected to reach 16.4 million by 2000 and 18.3 million by 2010. Greater Los Angeles, therefore, will retain in 2000 its current position as one of the twelve largest cities in the world, according to Peter Hall's *The World Cities*. This fact is impressive when it is considered in the context of urban growth around the globe. In 1950, Hall notes, seven of the world's twelve largest cities were North American or European. By 2000 only two—Los Angeles and New York—will be. Greater New York is not growing rapidly, but it will remain on the list because of its currently enormous population. Greater Los Angeles, however, *is* growing rapidly. Indeed, of the top twelve cities projected for the year 2000, Los Angeles and Tokyo will be the only highly developed post-industrial cities doing so, fast growth being common now only in developing and newly industrializing countries.

Why is Los Angeles the only fast-growing large city in a post-industrial North American or European nation? After all, like other large North American and European metropolitan areas, Los Angeles now has considerable population emigration. During the early and middle 1970s the population of the city of Los Angeles actually declined, as emigration increased and immigration from the rest of the United States decreased. Young working- and middle-class Americans were deciding that Los Angeles housing prices were too high, and Mexican immigrants had pushed down local wages for unskilled and semi-skilled labor. In the late 1970s, however, Los Angeles began gaining population again. The emigration did not slacken, but the metropolitan area became the leading point of entry for legal immigrants to the United States. Since the late 1970s, moreover, Los Angeles has also gained hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants.

As the metropolitan area's population increases, its ethnic composition is becoming less Anglo and more Latin and Asian. The Anglo population will drop from 60 percent to approximately 40 percent in 2010, while remaining stable in absolute terms, according to a recent report by Frank E. Hotchkiss, the director of regional strategic planning for the Southern California Association of Governments. The non-Hispanic black population will rise from 9 percent to 10 percent, increasing by approximately 300,000. The Asian population will grow from 6.2 percent to 9.3 percent, increasing by almost one million. The Hispanic population will rise from 24 percent to 40 percent, increasing by more than four million.

Greater Los Angeles is well on its way to becoming the first major "Third World city" in the mainland United States, with the majority of residents in the metropolitan area of non-European ancestry. Although it is impossible to verify claims about relative ethnic populations in cities all over the world, some Angelenos boast that greater Los Angeles is the largest Mexican metropolitan area outside



MUFFLER SHOP, EAST LOS ANGELES

Mexico, the second largest Chinese metropolitan area outside China, the second largest Japanese metropolitan area outside Japan, the largest Korean metropolitan area outside Korea, the largest Philippine metropolitan area outside the Philippines, and the largest Vietnamese metropolitan area outside Vietnam.

A visit to Broadway in downtown Los Angeles should persuade anyone that a significant part of Los Angeles is already a Third World city. Before the Second World War a six-block stretch of Broadway was one of the leading shopping and movie-theater centers for middle-class Anglo families, who rode the electrified trolleys known as Red Cars downtown from all over the metropolitan area. Today Broadway is the shopping and movie-theater center for the city's Hispanic residents, most of whom come downtown on buses. The street scene is as crowded, lively, and noisy as any in the nation. The movie palaces are little changed since before the war, except that they now show films in Spanish. So successful are the apparel and shoe stores that retail rents along Broadway are nearly as high as those in Beverly Hills (\$5 to \$8 a square foot per month versus \$5 to \$12 a square foot).

In the past decade Asian immigrants have also created their own thriving commercial and residential districts. Many of these Asian enclaves have emerged in the sub-

LITTLE SAIGON, WESTMINSTER



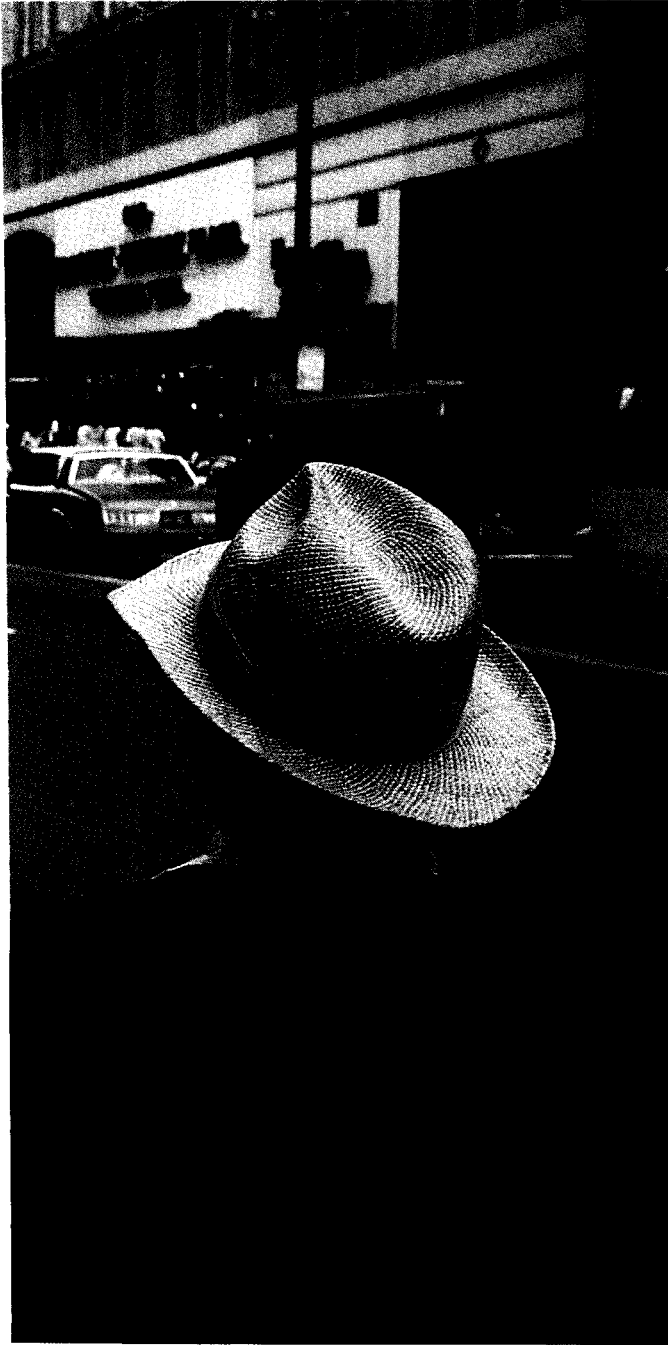


urbs, as affluent newcomers have abandoned the inner-city Asian neighborhoods to more recent immigrants. Less than a decade ago the mile-long stretch of Bolsa Avenue in the Orange County towns of Westminster and Garden Grove, for example, was lined with half-empty shopping centers, vacant lots, and bean fields. Today several hundred Vietnamese-owned shops, restaurants, banks, and professional offices serve the metropolitan area's approximately 120,000 Vietnamese residents, and the strip is known as Little Saigon. On weekends Vietnamese flock to Bolsa Avenue to shop and see friends. Tens of thousands of them have moved to Westminster and Garden Grove, giving an Asian spirit to a suburban area previously best known as the location of the evangelist Robert Schuller's

Crystal Cathedral. Indeed, Bolsa Avenue has become the Vietnamese capital of America. In the San Gabriel Valley, Alhambra's Asian population has tripled, from 12 percent to 36 percent of its population of 71,300, in the past seven years.

Even more startling is the population shift in Monterey Park. Fifteen years ago this suburban town in the western San Gabriel Valley, five miles east of downtown Los Angeles, was primarily Anglo and Latino, like the rest of the valley. Now the population of 60,000 is about 50 percent Asian, most of it middle class, making Monterey Park the most heavily Asian city in the mainland United States. (See the accompanying article by Nicholas Lemann.)

Although the Hispanic and Asian newcomers have



gained more attention in the press, the metropolitan area has attracted another significant group of new arrivals: well-educated, upper-middle-class Anglo professionals and businessmen. While the overall Anglo influx into Los Angeles has declined, more and more of these well-paid newcomers have been attracted to the city from the East Coast, Midwest, and San Francisco to run the metropolitan area's burgeoning enterprises. Some are attracted to Los Angeles more by the vibrant economy than by the intrinsic qualities of the region. A search-firm executive snidely told a San Francisco resident who had reluctantly agreed to take a new job in Los Angeles, "You move to Los Angeles so that you can someday afford to move back to San Francisco."

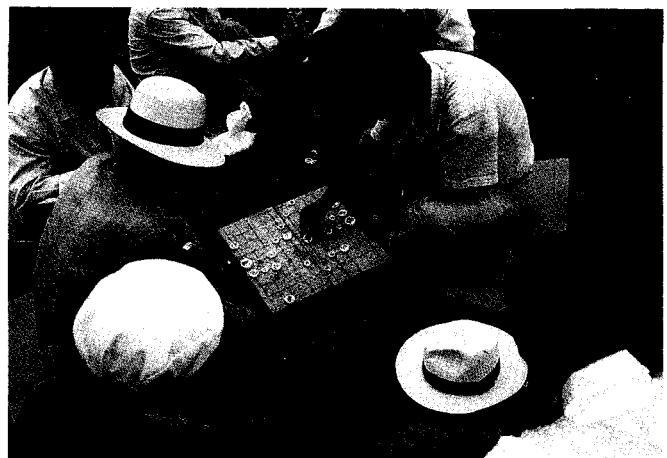
The resulting demand for high-priced showplace homes on the city's affluent and overwhelmingly Anglo "Westside"—the local term for the adjacent Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, Brentwood, and Pacific Palisades neighborhoods—has recently led to the phenomenon known as tear-downs. Homeowners and real-estate speculators are demolishing 2,000- and 3,000-square-foot houses and building flashy 8,000- and 10,000-square-foot "mansions," even if this means leaving only five or ten feet of open space on each side of the half-acre lot and sacrificing the back-yard lawn to the obligatory swimming pool and guesthouse. The economics of tear-downs is astonishing, even in the Westside's hyperinflated real-estate market. In one typical Beverly Hills transaction in the flats below the Beverly Hills Hotel, a speculator paid \$1.7 million for a one-acre property, ripped down the 1920s house on it, built an 8,000-square-foot house for a little over \$1 million, and sold the property for \$4 million. In pricier Bel-Air, speculators are paying up to \$3 million for tear-downs on one-acre lots. Even twenty-year-old houses are being demolished.

Culture at Last

ANGELENOS HAVE PERHAPS AN EVEN GREATER CULTURAL inferiority complex than did, say, the late-nineteenth-century New York robber barons or the Chicago meat-packers. They know that the East Coast elite often regard them as sun-baked nouveaux riches or flakes, or both; they have heard Johnny Carson's joke that the only live culture in Los Angeles is in its yogurt. Indeed, relative old-timers remember when the Los Angeles County Museum of Art hid its Jackson Pollock in a storeroom and removed a Picasso because it was "Communist propaganda."

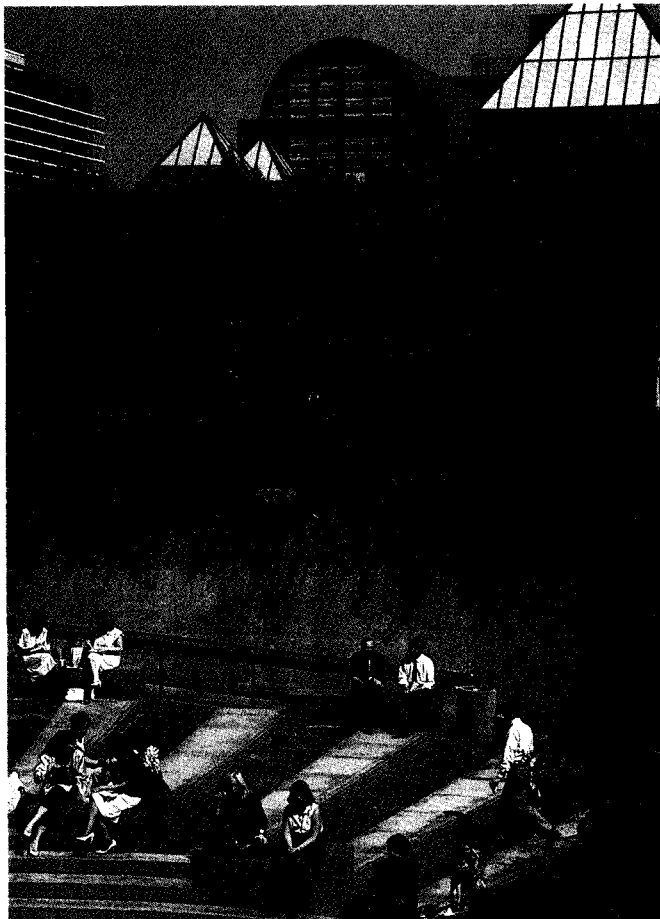
Artistic activity in Los Angeles, however, may soon rival that in New York. As Los Angeles has become richer, more populous, and more ethnically diverse over the past decade, it has also become more sophisticated. Most middle-class and affluent Angelenos are more excited by the city's thriving art scene and excellent new restaurants than by

THE BROADWAY SHOPPING DISTRICT (LEFT) AND A GAME OF CHANGI IN KOREATOWN (BELOW)



news that Los Angeles has become the nation's second most populous metropolitan area or that its port has surpassed that of New York. Many Angelenos are eager to flaunt the icons of sophistication that money can buy—including a record promoter who avidly buys Old Masters paintings of dubious authenticity for his 1920s villa and a businessman who has turned the back yard of his half-acre Beverly Hills "mini-estate" into a "sculpture garden" and issues engraved invitations for the unveiling of his latest acquisition. The *Los Angeles Times* Westside edition carries real-estate advertisements for new houses with "gallery wall space" and "a courtyard for your Henry Moore."

On the city's often self-conscious cultural front, nothing



SPIRAL COURT, BUNKER HILL, DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

has attracted more attention than the recent opening of two new art museums. *Newsweek* proclaimed, "To a widening international circle of contemporary artists, dealers and collectors, Los Angeles is the new place to be." In December of 1986 the Museum of Contemporary Art opened in its new downtown Los Angeles home. With a permanent collection already totaling 600 pieces, it is the only Los Angeles museum devoted to art dating from 1940 onward. So far, MOCA's art collection has taken second place to the museum's extraordinary building, designed by the Japanese architect Arata Isozaki. It is a series of playful forms—barrel vaults, cubes, and rooftop pyramids—executed in red Indian sandstone, aluminum panels, and

glass. Across town the twenty-three-year-old Los Angeles County Museum of Art doubled its exhibition space with the opening, a month before MOCA's opening, of the \$35 million Robert O. Anderson Wing for modern art. LACMA has also started construction on a Pavilion for Japanese Art, which will display the museum's world-renowned Shin'enkan collection of Edo-period paintings and serve as an international center for the study and exhibition of Japanese art.

Norton Simon is planning to make a \$750 million gift of his art collection to UCLA. And the J. Paul Getty Trust, which already has the J. Paul Getty Museum, in Malibu, is planning a fine-arts center for a 110-acre hilltop site above Brentwood, eleven miles away. This will include another museum and the headquarters of the Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities and the Getty Conservation Institute. The current Getty Museum will be devoted to Greek and Roman antiquities. With an endowment of \$2.9 billion the Getty Trust can be the freest-spending museum fund in the world, much to the chagrin of, say, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, with its endowment of \$350 million. Indeed, the Getty Trust has so much money that it makes grants to other museums. It gave \$3 million unconditionally to MOCA and \$1 million to the Southwest Museum, near downtown Los Angeles.

Reflecting its iconoclastic image, Los Angeles also boasts several unconventional new museums. The Museum of Neon Art is the world's only museum created to preserve and exhibit vintage commercial neon signs and also the creations of contemporary artists working in the medium. The nearby Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, a non-profit artists' laboratory and gallery, has sponsored events as diverse as the Industrial Zone Surf Stomp Music Festival and performances by the Alien Comic. In a recent spoof on the local art scene, LACE funded and screened a video about COMA, the fictitious County of Orange Museum of Art. The video introduced the "museum curator" as she lounged at poolside and applied suntan lotion. Then it toured various COMA exhibits, including an early-1980s suburban tract home in miniature, a sculpture colonnade filled with high school athletic trophies, and the Neo-Expressionism Gallery, where visitors could acquire paintings and then consult a museum interior decorator about buying new upholstery to complement the artwork.

While undeniably funny, the COMA spoof perpetuated Angelenos' long-standing joke that the highest cultural peak in Orange County is the Matterhorn ride at Disneyland. In fact the metropolitan region's most impressive recent cultural accomplishment is not one of Los Angeles's new art museums: it is the Orange County Performing Arts Center, with its 3,000-seat theater and 300-seat rehearsal hall. Another, 1,000-seat theater is planned. The \$140 million in private contributions that built and endowed the complex is the result of the largest wholly private fundraising campaign ever conducted for a performing-arts center in the nation.

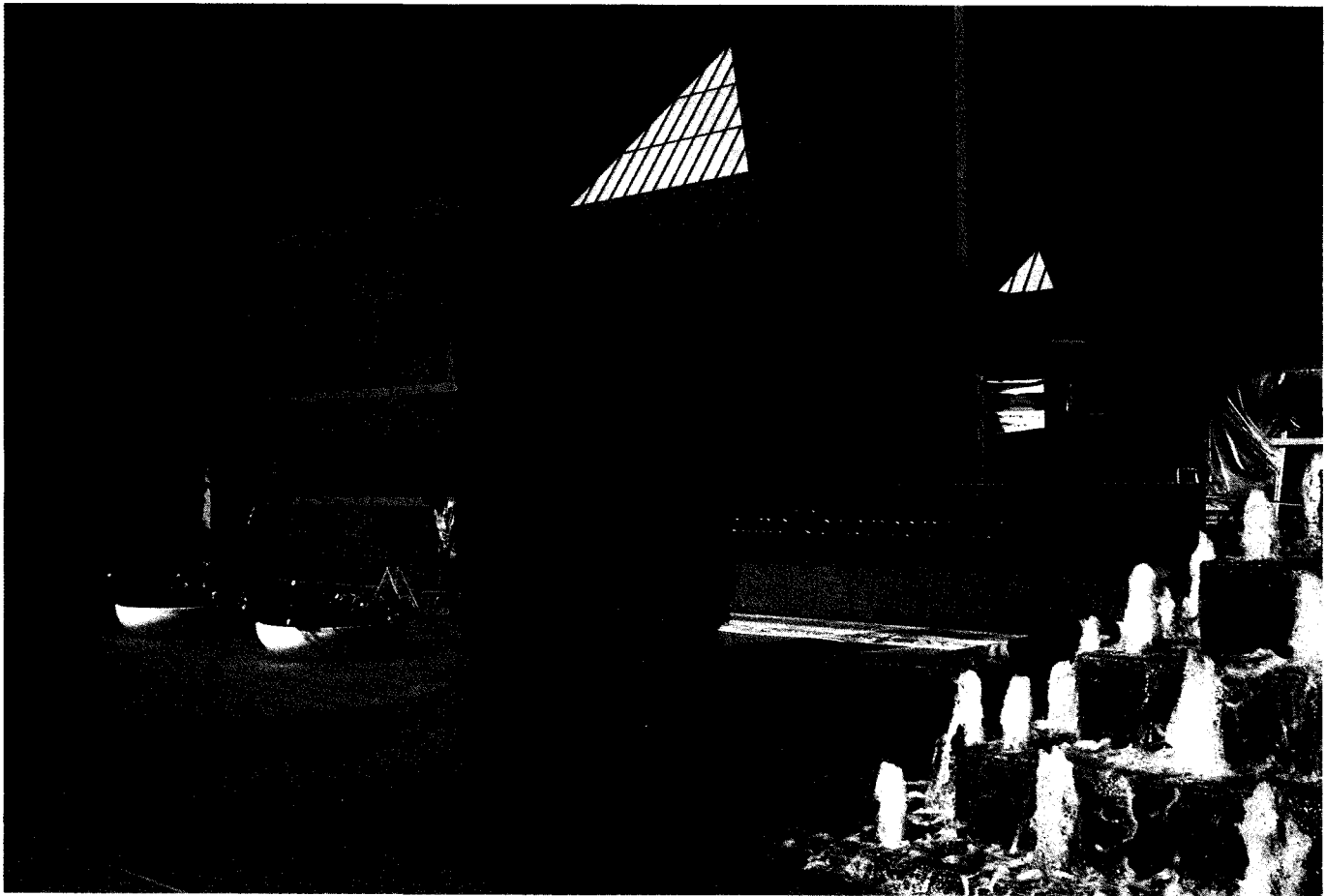
An Unconventional Power Structure

THE GROWTH OF GREATER LOS ANGELES'S ECONOMY, population, and cultural activity is impressive. But these changes have contributed to serious problems in metropolitan-area government, education, law enforcement, environmental protection, and transportation. Meeting these challenges requires renewed commitment on the part of the region's power structure, which has evolved beyond the typical big-city political, economic, and social hierarchy. Power and influence are now so dispersed that no one circle of interests is dominant.

In the past Los Angeles had its business and social elite,

getting anything done. Dorothy Chandler, the wife of the former *Los Angeles Times* publisher Norman Chandler and the mother of the paper's current publisher, Otis Chandler, was one of the first successful coalition-builders. In the late 1950s and early 1960s she brought together the old families, downtown corporations, show-business leaders, and self-made millionaire businessmen to build the Music Center of Los Angeles County, on Bunker Hill, downtown.

One of the most skillful coalition-builders of recent years is the three-term mayor, Tom Bradley. In a city where blacks constitute only 17 percent of the population, Bradley has had to build coalitions in order to survive. Sur-



THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, BUNKER HILL

which worked downtown and lived in Pasadena, San Marino, or the Hancock Park neighborhood, several miles west of downtown. The downtown California and Jonathan clubs represent the last vestiges of this system. Until last year, when the city passed an anti-discrimination ordinance, these two clubs still discriminated against nearly everyone except white males. These tradition-bound clubs are becoming less powerful as the Westside, with its highly visible Jewish population, the nouveau-riche Orange County town of Newport Beach, and the Hispanic and Asian communities increase in influence.

Today business and political leaders must be adept at building coalitions if the diverse groups are to cooperate in

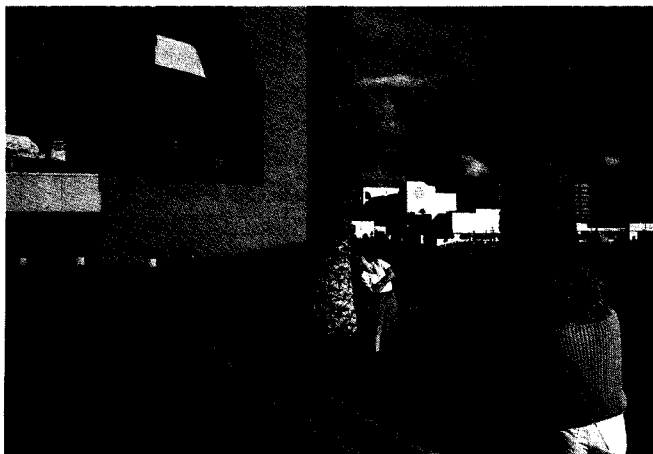
vive he has, despite what political scientists describe as a "weak mayor" system, to become the most effective mayor in recent Los Angeles history. Bradley's style involves low-key cajoling and constant communication with various groups, which means that he seldom wins sole credit for getting legislation passed or a project completed. But many of the city's finest recent accomplishments would not have happened without his leadership. A good example is the 1984 Olympics, for which Peter Ueberroth received the acclaim. But the Games would never have come to Los Angeles, much less been successful, without the constant support of the mayor.

Culture is one arena in which business, political, and so-

cial interests come together, in coalitions that include public-private partnerships. The year-old Museum of Contemporary Art, for instance, was created by the coordinated efforts of many private citizens in partnership with government—not just by one person's vision and money, as were the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Norton Simon collection. Eli Broad, a leading local collector of contemporary art and the chairman of Kaufman and Broad, one of the nation's largest home-building companies, was the catalyst for MOCA. After putting up \$1 million in 1979, Broad assembled a coalition of other collectors and influential citizens, which persuaded Mayor Tom Bradley that the \$1.5 billion California Plaza redevelopment project downtown would be an ideal place for a modern-art museum. Through the imaginative use of the Community Redevelopment Agency provision that 1.5 percent of any renewal project's construction budget be devoted to public art, Bunker Hill Associates paid for the construction of the \$23 million MOCA building rather than sprinkling the 11.2-acre project site with sculptures. Broad and his coalition assembled the museum's permanent art collection and raised a \$20 million endowment. As a result, Los Angeles gained one of the nation's finest modern-art museum buildings without spending a dime of public money but with significant public support.

So far, the coalition power structure has served the city of Los Angeles well. But the system's flexibility is now being tested on many fronts, particularly political ones. There are ten Anglos on the fifteen-member Los Angeles City Council, although the Anglo share of the city's population is only 41 percent. In contrast, Hispanics—with 36 percent of the population—have only two city-council members. Hispanics are only beginning to get their fair share of local political power. In December, 1985, Richard Alatorre became the first Hispanic to win a city-council seat in two decades. The second Hispanic council member, Gloria Molina, was elected last February but only after the U.S. Justice Department found the city's gerrymandered council districts in violation of the Voting Rights Act and ordered the city to enact an equitable redistricting plan.

ORANGE COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, COSTA MESA



Problems as Big as the City

AS A NEW REGIONAL POWER STRUCTURE TAKES SHAPE, it faces the urban ills that are often overlooked because of the region's affluence and pleasant climate. While most other cities have similar problems, those of Los Angeles are exacerbated by the large population of legal and illegal immigrants and the enormous size of the region. As the problems increase, some Angelenos are beginning to believe that Tom Bradley's effectiveness as a mayor is waning. According to a 1987 *Los Angeles Times* poll, 45 percent of those surveyed said that Los Angeles was changing faster than the mayor, 31 percent said that he was keeping up with changes, and only eight percent said that he was ahead of them. After unsuccessful campaigns for governor in 1982 and 1986, the seventy-year-old Bradley has lost influence citywide in the past two years, as was made plain when his ally and handpicked candidate to succeed him, Pat Russell, the city-council president, lost her council seat to an anti-growth candidate, Ruth Galanter, last June. That election made clear that Bradley's desire for Los Angeles to become "a world-class city" had left many people in the neighborhoods behind. They are more concerned about crime, schools, traffic, the environment, and the deterioration of the much-heralded Southern California life-style.

Los Angeles has indeed become faster paced, more congested, and meaner in the past ten years. To describe most of today's Angelenos as laid-back would be as inappropriate as calling most New Yorkers polite. Only affluent Angelenos can now enjoy the pleasures that the working and middle classes took for granted ten or fifteen years ago, such as spacious and reasonably priced housing, easy access to nearby beaches and mountains, and exemplary public education.

The Los Angeles Unified School District, which encompasses an even larger area than the city of Los Angeles and is independent of the city government, faces a seemingly impossible challenge. In contrast to the situation in nearly all other big cities, in Los Angeles the school-age population is increasing, at the rate of 14,000 students each year. To accommodate this growth, the district needs to build nine new elementary schools, a junior high school, and a senior high school each year for the next five years, and also do something about the \$400 million backlog of deferred maintenance on existing buildings. At the present rates of student increases and school construction, 50,000 students will not find seats in the classroom in five years.

Educating all these children is increasingly difficult. Of the nearly 600,000 students in the Los Angeles Unified School District, from kindergarten to high school, about 25 percent exhibit only a limited proficiency in English and speak one of more than eighty other languages. More than half the pupils in some classes require remedial English instruction. To compound the district's educational problems, more than half the district's children come from homes whose incomes are under \$14,250 a year.



PICNIC, HUNTINGTON BEACH

Other social problems affect all Angelenos, whatever their income, as the spate of freeway shootings last summer reminded them. Los Angeles has the nation's third highest crime rate, behind Detroit and Dallas. And if the recent allegations that Los Angeles has emerged as a \$1-billion-a-year clearinghouse for cocaine in the western United States are correct, crime rates are likely to go even higher. In the gang-infested South Central ghetto, teenage drug entrepreneurs drive custom \$50,000 to \$100,000 BMWs and Mercedes, and their gangs' foot soldiers brandish Uzi submachine guns and Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifles. About 70 percent of gang killings involve innocent bystanders.

The list of environmental problems is also daunting. The handsome physical setting of Los Angeles is more threatened than the settings of most of the world's major cities. All the region's residents are affected by the ever-present threat of earthquakes, foul-smelling and chemical-laden tap water, and the potential for water shortages by the year 2000.

An equally serious but often ignored environmental threat is the pollution of Santa Monica Bay, which forms the visually splendid backdrop for the city's beaches from Palos Verdes to Malibu. Raw sewage is occasionally dumped into the ocean by the city's overburdened sewer system, endangering the health of swimmers, and the ocean water is so polluted with cancer-causing DDT and PCBs that much marine life is now deformed or afflicted with tumors and fin rot. Indeed, one meal of local sea bass would exceed Environmental Protection Agency lifetime limits for several toxic chemicals.

The DDT had already entered the local ocean food chain when use of the chemical was outlawed. The sources of the continuing PCB and other chemical pollution are industrial sludge that is pumped into the ocean without complete treatment, oil and exhaust particles washed off streets into storm drains by winter rains, and smog particles that are washed out of the air and off plants by rain. The city has repeatedly delayed improving its waste-treatment system so that all household and industrial waste water would receive full secondary treatment to

remove bacteria and solid matter before it was pumped into the ocean. In fact, it paid a \$625,000 fine for missing a recent deadline for full secondary treatment, in a consent decree with the Environmental Protection Agency and the state Regional Water Quality Control Board. The city now faces a new deadline, 1998. The State of California is unwilling to wait until then, and has filed a suit against the city, threatening to press for \$100 million in damages unless the city ends the sewage contamination.

The best-known environmental problem, of course, is smog. Los Angeles has the most polluted air in the United States. On two out of three days at least part of the metropolitan area violates federal air-quality standards. On the smoggiest days ozone readings in some areas are often three times more than allowable standards.

Although air quality has continued to improve over the past decade and is far better than it was in the pre-EPA 1960s, it is expected to worsen in the 1990s, simply because of the increases in the population, the number of automobiles, and the amount of industry. Because prevailing winds off the Pacific blow much of the smog into the inland Riverside and San Bernardino counties, where most new "affordable" housing (under \$150,000) is being built, air pollution will affect more people in the future. Coastal communities with relatively clean air, like Pacific Palisades, Santa Monica, and Palos Verdes, are almost fully developed, and housing prices in them are among the highest in the metropolitan region.

Freeways and Down Time

BESIDES THESE DIFFICULTIES, GREATER LOS ANGELES also faces another seemingly insoluble problem: transportation, which affects almost everyone and will eventually limit the region's economic growth. Easy mobility is essential to anyone in Los Angeles and forms an important part of the city's life-style.

But the days of driving simply for fun are over. Los Angeles County has four of North America's five busiest freeways. Here traffic frequently slows to a rush-hour crawl during the middle of the day or late at night. On the other, less-congested freeways, rush hours last from 7:00 to 10:00 A.M. and from 3:00 to 7:00 P.M., unless accidents or rain extend the congestion. Even on "good" mornings more than 300 miles of the 740 miles of freeways in Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura counties are clogged with commuters going no more than fifteen miles an hour. Only thirty miles of freeways were similarly overburdened in 1963. On some freeways there is enough traffic to fill an additional ten to twenty lanes, if such an expansion were physically and financially possible. Not surprisingly, Los Angeles motorists waste 100,000 hours a day in traffic jams.

This traffic congestion adds up to a lack of freedom for nearly all Southern Californians, not to mention an expense and a cause of emotional stress. More time on the freeways means less time at home. Rush-hour slowdowns simply rule out some personal outings or business trips



COMBATANTS IN WATTS (ABOVE) AND
THE HARBOR FREEWAY AT RUSH HOUR (RIGHT)

during the work week. Who wants to make the sixty-mile trip from the Westside to Orange County during rush hour if it will mean two and a half hours of bumper-to-bumper traffic?

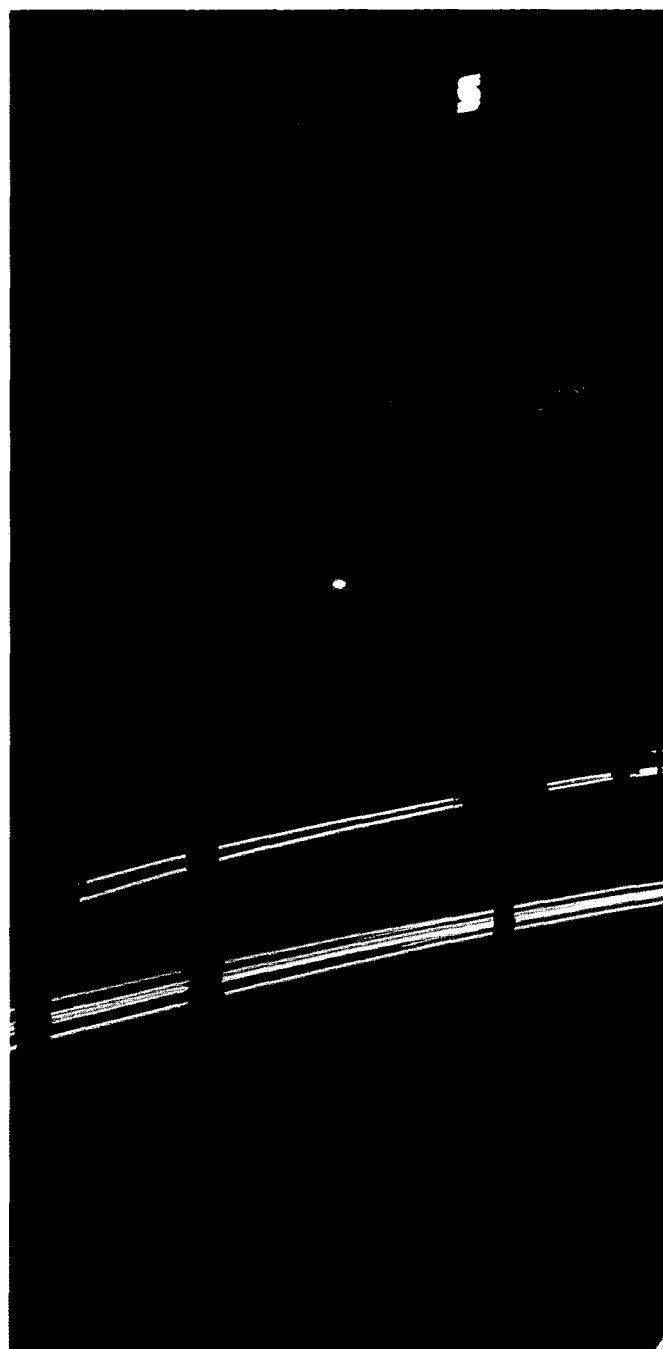
The traffic congestion, moreover, will only get worse. Los Angeles ranks seventeenth among American cities in miles of freeway per million population, and California spends the least state and local highway money per capita of the fifty states, owing to the slow-growth philosophy inherited from the Jerry Brown administration and local resistance everywhere to new freeway construction. Transportation demand is soaring faster than the population. From now to 2000, reports Martin Wachs, a professor in the Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UCLA, the region's population will increase 25 percent but the number of licensed drivers will increase 32 percent, number of trips 35 percent, and vehicle-miles of traffic 41 percent.

If these trends continue, traffic will soon become "intolerable," according to the Southern California Association of Governments. By 2010 the number of miles of freeways that are congested during the afternoon rush hour will more than double. "Roughly 50 percent of the region's travel time will be spent in delay," according to a recent *Los Angeles Times* article. Anthony Downs, of the Brookings Institution, recently said, "The only solution to the traffic problem is to buy a BMW with comfortable seats, a high-quality sound system, and car phone, and enjoy it as best you can."

Current development practices aggravate the problem. The Los Angeles City Council frequently exempts developers from preparing environmental-impact reports and traffic studies if their projects are anywhere other than downtown and can meet the municipal zoning code, which permits far greater commercial and residential density than the streets can accommodate. After years of increasing frustration, Los Angeles voters took advantage of California's initiative process a year ago, overwhelmingly passing Proposition U, which halves the maximum permissible density on 85 percent of the city's commercial and indus-

trial land, over the objections of Mayor Tom Bradley and the former city-council president Pat Russell. In the same election voters in the rich Orange County town of Newport Beach defeated the Irvine Company's plan for a \$400 million mixed-use complex overlooking Newport's harbor. The no-growth forces spent \$10,000 to defeat the project. The Irvine Company's unsuccessful campaign cost \$500,000. The company had promised to spend \$47 million for road improvements.

The rapid geographic expansion of greater Los Angeles will further increase traffic problems. Residential growth will continue to move eastward, toward the San Bernardino and Riverside areas and even into the Mojave Desert, north of the lofty San Gabriel Mountains. But jobs are not

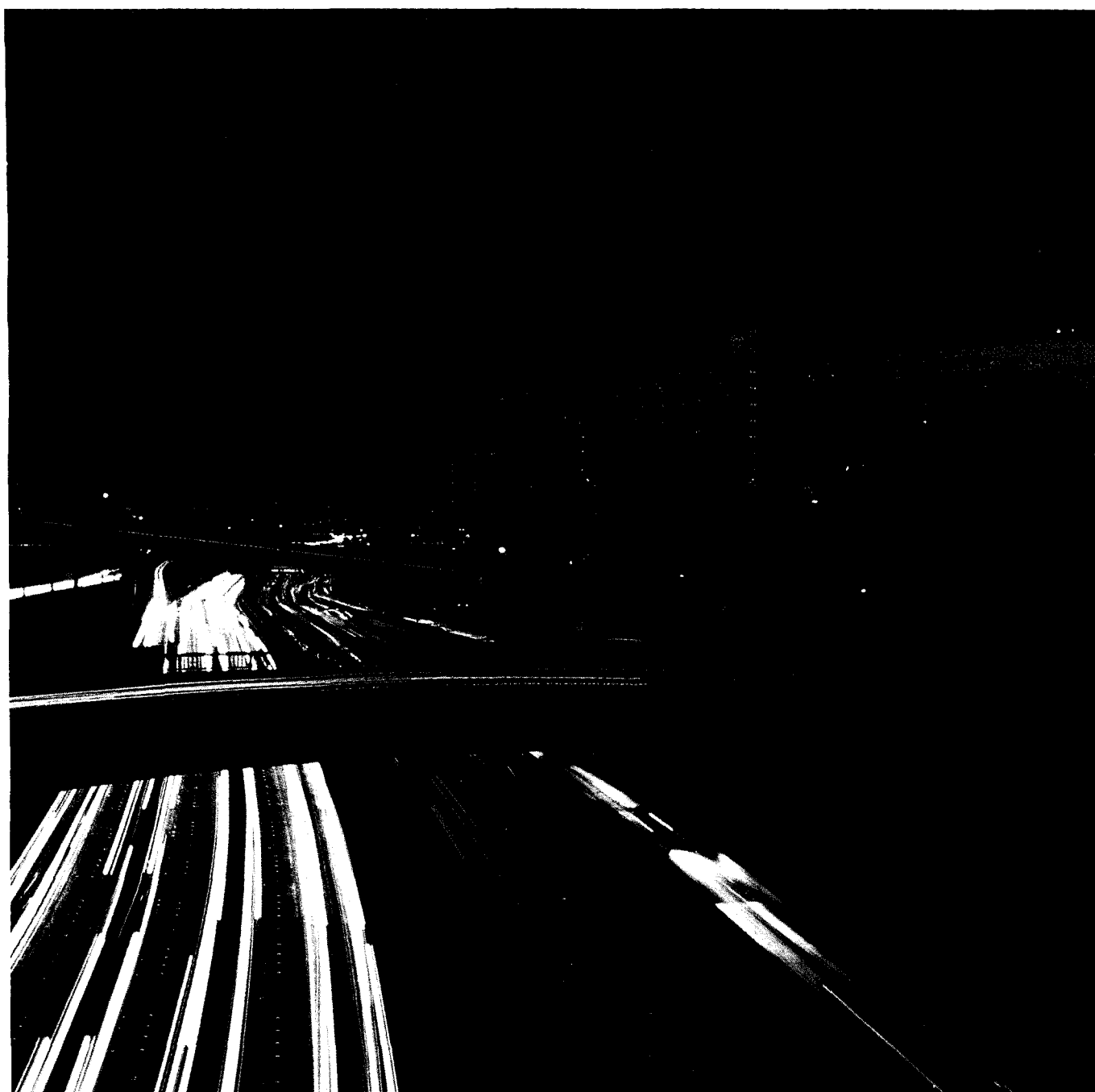


expected to follow the housing quickly, and the result will be that commutes will grow even longer.

In response to the growing traffic paralysis, politicians, experts, and citizens have proposed such futuristic ideas as double-decking existing freeways and removing auto wrecks by helicopter. Most suggestions are more predictable. One that is often proposed involves constructing new freeways. Although more freeways are being built at the edges of the metropolitan region, the new Century Freeway is probably the last one that will be completed within heavily populated areas. The costs of catching up with demand through such road construction are too great and the benefits too small. Already twenty years in the planning, the seventeen-mile freeway is expected to cost \$1.7 bil-

lion. After nine years of litigation, more than 6,000 homes in its path have been demolished. Experts admit that the Century Freeway will suffer rush-hour traffic jams from the day it opens, in 1993.

Another controversial claimed solution is the Metro Rail subway. After twelve years of planning, construction began last year. Metro Rail's first 4.4-mile segment, which is expected to cost \$1.25 billion, will run from Union Station, just north of downtown Los Angeles, through the downtown area to Alvarado Street, in a run-down residential area west of downtown. If completed as planned, the subway will run approximately twenty miles down Wilshire Boulevard, through Hollywood, and into the San Fernando Valley. The total cost is estimated at \$4.5 billion,





**Grand Touring
Beretta GT**
\$11,656.00*

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Corsica LT**
\$10,991.00**

To those who regard Rt #1 as playground, the description "means a car with an engine, drivetrain and suspension that are up to the task of flattening out the hills and straightening out the curves.

Such a car is the Beretta GT available with all the niceties

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locks, stabilizer bars front and
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the sporty set, right!
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and need a four-door sedan?
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is there except the sleek coupe
body. Instead, you get a sleek
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Let's get it together. Buckle up.
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terms and conditions of this
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making Metro Rail one of the world's most expensive mass-transit projects.

Metro Rail's proponents, who are led by Tom Bradley and downtown business interests, claim that Metro Rail is needed to keep the city from strangling on its own traffic. According to the plans, the twenty-mile subway will eventually be the centerpiece of a 150-mile commuter-rail network in Los Angeles County. Opponents claim, however, that Metro Rail is an urban status symbol that will do little to alleviate congestion. Its 4.4-mile initial segment, they say, serves no real commuter needs. Nor will the entire twenty-mile project appreciably reduce traffic problems, because Los Angeles is not a nineteenth- or early-twenti-

Metro Rail's critics also charge that the initial ridership projections of 55,000 passengers daily for the first leg of Metro Rail are inflated, just as such projections have been, in the planning stages, for almost every subway system built in the United States since the Second World War. For Metro Rail, the accuracy of ridership figures is critical, because all operating costs are to be paid for through the fares (\$1.50 a ride), a financial feat that no new American subway system has achieved in forty years. To cite one example, the fares collected by the new MARTA system in Atlanta cover only 40 percent of the system's operating expenses and none of the amortized capital costs.

But this is only one aspect of the concern over Metro



BUS STOP AT CLOUGHERTY BROTHERS MEAT-PACKING, VERNON

eth-century city, with subways and commuter trains shuttling between a strong downtown core and suburbs radiating outward in declining density. The pattern of high-density office and retail buildings in the eighteen urban-village cores of Los Angeles results in too many routes between where people live and where they work for any subway or even bus network to serve them. Metro Rail's twenty-mile route to the San Fernando Valley will service only downtown and the much smaller mid-Wilshire and Hollywood districts. These three areas provide about five percent of the metropolitan area's employment, and the \$4.5 billion Metro Rail will *potentially* serve 1.25 percent of its work force.

Rail's funding. The exact route of the system beyond its short first leg has not been determined, owing to geological problems. Seemingly every route revision is accompanied by an escalation in the budget. Only five months after Metro Rail's splashy groundbreaking, in a ceremony that cost \$90,000, the estimate of the system's cost was revised upward by \$1 billion. At present, Metro Rail is guaranteed only \$870 million in federal funds, which will be paid in increments over the next eight years.

Although downtown Los Angeles streets are now being closed and dug up for Metro Rail, no one at city hall has firmly said where the additional construction money will come from, and with good reason. For a city beset by

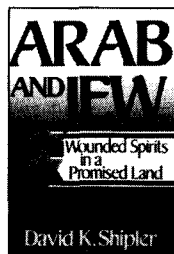
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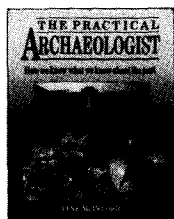
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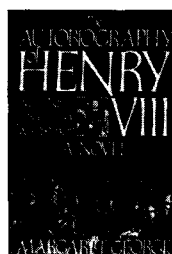
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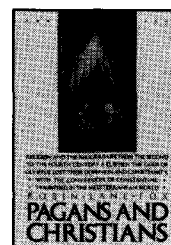
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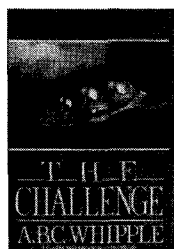
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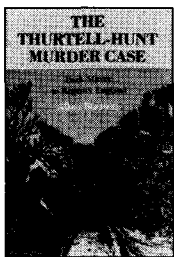
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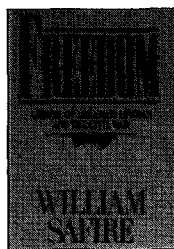
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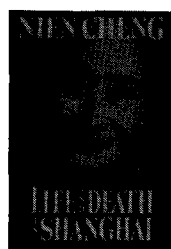
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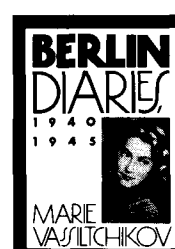
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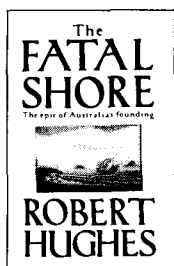
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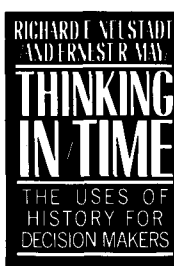
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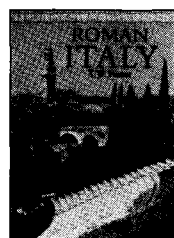
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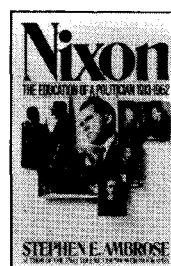
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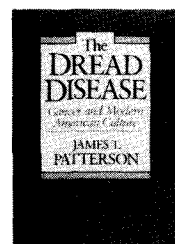
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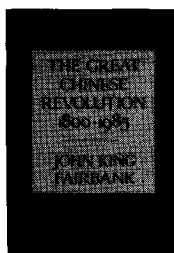
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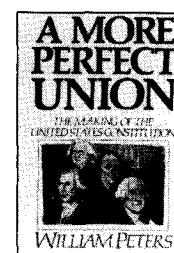
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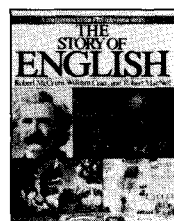
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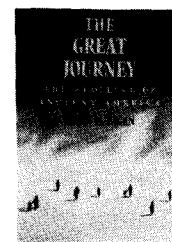
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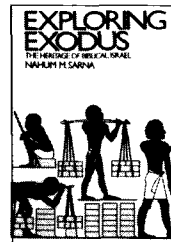
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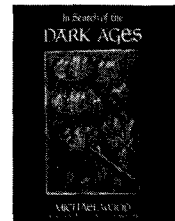
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A TEAR-DOWN, BEVERLY HILLS

seemingly insoluble social, environmental, and transportation problems—and one with limited revenue-raising opportunities—the construction of the impractical multibillion-dollar Metro Rail is scandalous.

Less expensive and more workable tactics could be used to fight the transportation problem. Some experts urge the adoption of a region-wide traffic-management plan consisting of more one-way streets, stricter enforcement of ordinances against parking on the street, more computer-controlled traffic signals, the encouragement of peripheral parking outside urban-village cores, the speedier detection and clearance of accidents on freeways, the encouragement of staggered work hours, and more freeway lanes set aside for carpools and buses. Already Los Angeles has the largest bus transit system in the nation, carrying 1.5 million riders every day. The bus operation comes closer to full capacity than any other in America. Its passenger volume exceeds that of most of the nation's rail systems. The Wilshire-corridor lines, for example, carry 190,000 riders a day, whereas only 80,000 people travel those routes in automobiles.

Some efforts at traffic management have already worked in Los Angeles. During the 1984 Olympics traffic volume increased by as much as 11 percent. But traffic was moving at 55 miles an hour on the freeways at rush hour, because

PROTECTED LAND ADJOINING HOUSING PROJECT, ONTARIO



of the temporary imposition of traffic-management steps, such as alterations in work schedules and hours when delivery trucks were permitted to use the freeways, and increasing commuter parking near freeway entrances. This was the largest experiment ever in traffic management, and it is being studied worldwide to determine what lessons can be learned and what steps should be implemented permanently in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

Banding Together to Solve Problems

THE SOLUTIONS TO THE METROPOLITAN AREA'S problems, particularly transportation and air quality, require regional planning and cooperation—most notably in encouraging future development along the urban-village pattern, to bring jobs, housing, and shopping closer together. The Southern California Association of Governments recently commissioned a computer model of greater Los Angeles transportation in the year 2010, which examined the effect of measures like double-decking freeways, building more freeways, expanding mass transit, and imposing traffic-management plans. According to the model, everything that could feasibly be done would be only a gesture toward meaningful relief of the expected congestion, except for one thing—moving employment closer to housing, and vice versa. This solved the congestion problem.

Los Angeles has a history of solving problems as a region—for example, bringing in plentiful water at the turn of the century, which made possible the boom of the teens and twenties and sustains the metropolitan area of today. Similarly, the creation of the man-made port at San Pedro, also at the turn of the century, was an important prerequisite for Los Angeles's growth as a trading, manufacturing, and oil-exporting region.

Ninety years ago, however, the Los Angeles metropolitan region was much smaller, and the number of governmental jurisdictions to coordinate was much smaller. Today the metropolis extends across five counties and 157 city jurisdictions, and there are innumerable special districts dealing with specific issues such as mosquito abatement and flood control. The city has grown so large that it takes two hours to drive from one end of it to the other—when traffic is light. The potential that a series of less-than-optimal local solutions will be imposed on regional problems, therefore, is great.

Orange County, for example, often tries to assert its independence from Los Angeles, even though it is an extension of the metropolitan area, just as White Plains is an extension of New York City and King of Prussia is an extension of Philadelphia. One way in which Orange County tries to demonstrate that its more than two million residents are not part of the metropolitan region is through its airport. The other five of the six major airports in greater Los Angeles voluntarily coordinate their planning and safety efforts through a metropolitan-area-wide airport authority. This authority happens, for historic reasons, to be

run by the city of Los Angeles, even though Los Angeles International is the only one of the airports within the city limits. But Orange County, whose airport has serious air-traffic congestion problems, refuses to participate in the authority, undermining the authority's ability to solve the region's congestion.

Orange County's frequent refusals to participate in regional planning point to a problem faced by all metropolitan areas: the competition between city and suburb. Thirty years ago our central cities did not want to pay for the infrastructure necessary to extend services to the growing suburban areas. Now the nation's suburbs attract the vast majority of new employment, new commercial develop-

essarily feel a part of greater New York City. Nor do residents of Gwinnett County, Georgia, feel particularly connected to metropolitan Atlanta. And the public officials of greater New York and Atlanta are doing little to dispel these notions of separateness. In fact, looking at regional solutions to regional problems would go against the strategy of big-city mayors and their powerful lobbying organizations, such as the League of Cities and the Council of Mayors. For the past generation these organizations and their members have been fighting suburbs and suburban growth.

One reason for the sense of regional identity in greater Los Angeles is the area's long history of decentralized development. By the early twentieth century the area now



JNPROTECTED LAND BELOW SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS, ONTARIO

ment, and new tax base. Turning their backs on the central cities, the suburbs want to write off urban problems that they think cannot be solved. The result is competition—and suspicion—between city and suburb which hinders all forms of metropolitan cooperation and problem-solving.

But in spite of the growing geographic and ethnic distances, most of the 12.6 million people in the greater Los Angeles region still feel that they are part of "Los Angeles." When a resident of Ontario, fifty miles east of downtown Los Angeles, is asked by an out-of-towner where he or she lives, the answer is likely to be "Los Angeles" or "the Los Angeles area." In contrast, someone from Stamford, Connecticut, or Princeton, New Jersey, doesn't nec-

covered by greater Los Angeles contained several dozen towns, among them Pasadena, Riverside, San Bernardino, Long Beach, Beverly Hills, and Santa Monica. Each community was separated from the others by orange groves and bean fields, but all were linked by the 1,100-mile Red Car trolley network. The decentralized urban-village pattern actually followed from the Red Car system, not the freeways.

Because Los Angeles developed in this decentralized way rather than according to the traditional city-suburb pattern, every city in the metropolitan region has always included poor communities, urban employment centers, industrial districts, and cultural institutions. While Ange-



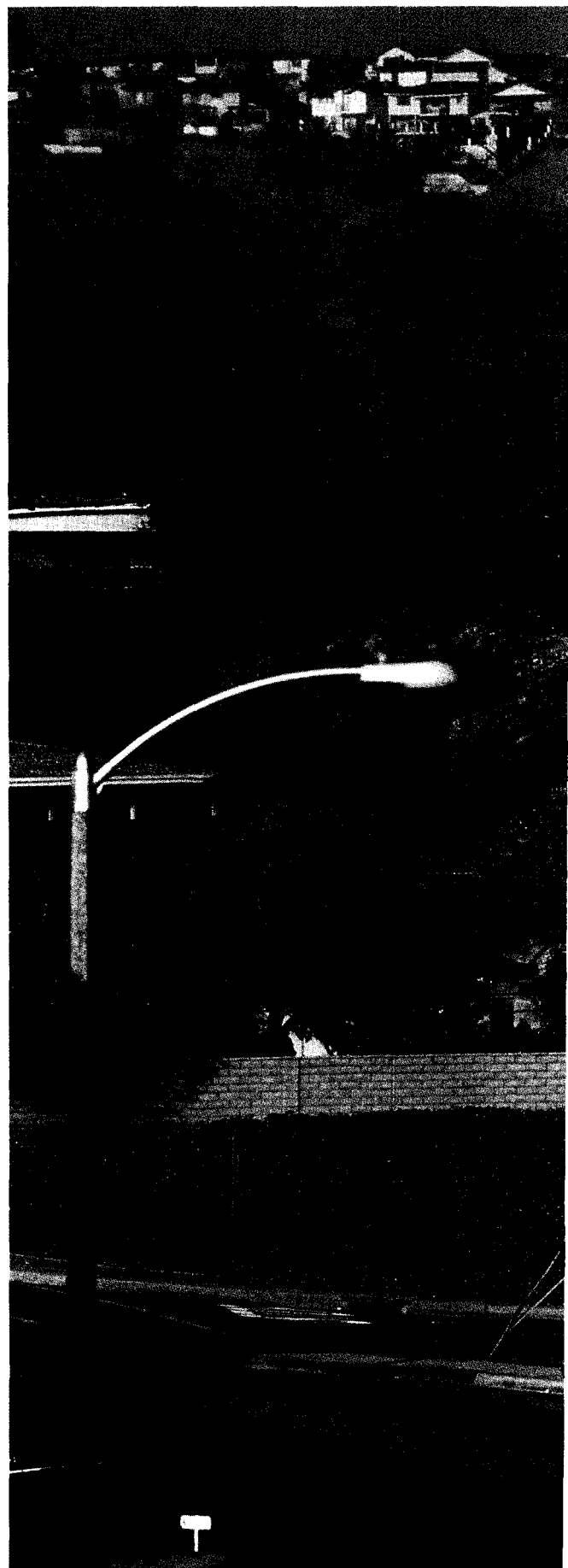
URBAN SPROUTINGS, COSTA MESA

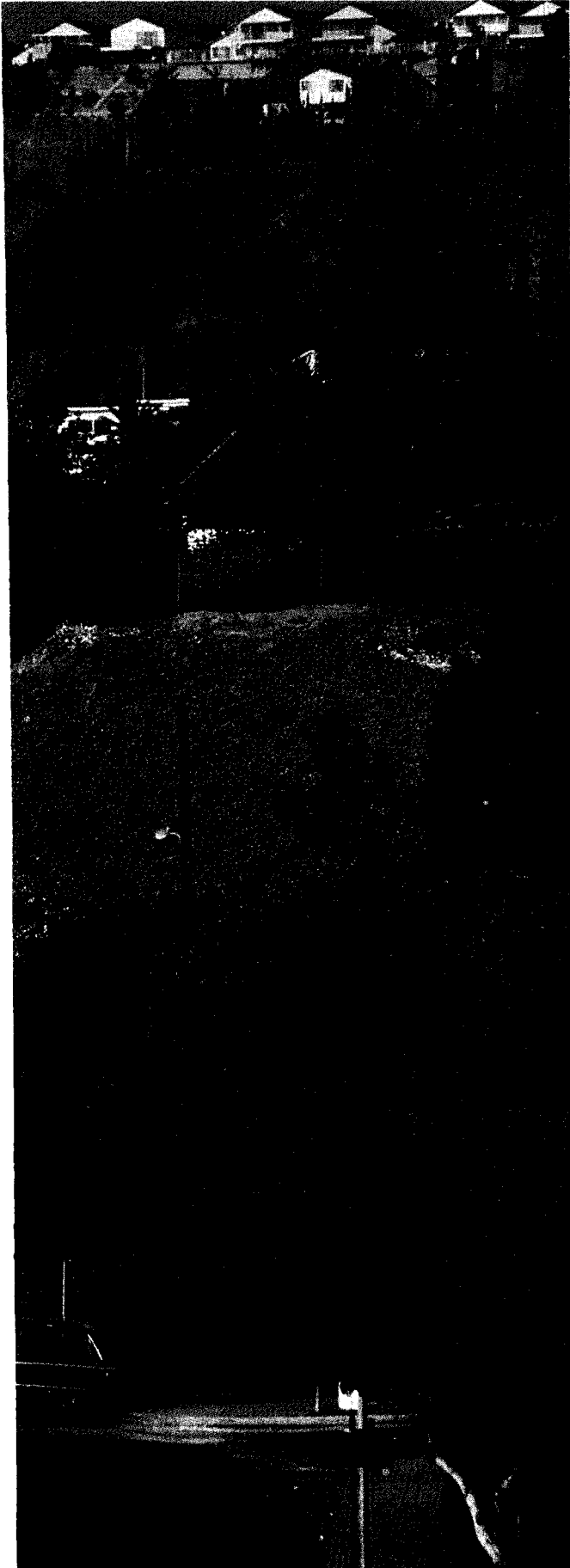
lenos can live, work, play, and shop in one section of the metropolitan area, they cannot isolate themselves from the diversity of urban life, as do the residents of many suburbs. When many Beverly Hills residents drive to the nearest freeway, for instance, they pass through a middle-class Anglo area, the largest Sikh neighborhood in Los Angeles, and a working-class black neighborhood—all within two miles.

Although the jumble of different uses and socio-economic classes in proximity is one reason that Los Angeles is so difficult for out-of-town visitors to comprehend, it gives middle-class and rich Angelenos a greater understanding of the metropolitan region than their counterparts demonstrate in most other cities.

Angelenos are also increasingly drawn together by an awareness of their city's "manifest destiny"—as a rival to New York City for the nation's financial and cultural leadership, as America's gateway to the Pacific at the dawn of what some observers predict will be the "Pacific century," and perhaps even as the world's financial capital. Before Los Angeles can realize its potential, though, its leadership must build broader metropolitan-wide coalitions to face problems like traffic, smog, ethnic rivalries, and generally poor public schools. Purely local solutions to traffic, for instance, are worthless. Every other metropolitan area in the country must eventually seek similar kinds of regional solutions to its own regional problems. Unfortunately, the cities and suburbs of most metropolitan areas are still too busy competing to begin.

The historian Lawrence Clark Powell, speaking at the celebration for the hundredth anniversary of the Historical Society of Southern California, in 1983, recalled, "In the early years of this century, it was gospel that we were destined to be the Athens of the West. Now we're more likely to become Rome. Our power is more imperial than classical." For Los Angeles to continue to achieve its imperial goals, it must rely on the major advantage of its regional identity. Without this identity and the willingness to solve its regional problems, the huge metropolitan area risks spinning apart. Only with regional unity and cooperation will Los Angeles fulfill its dreams of greatness. □





The ostensible troubles of Monterey Park, a mostly Asian suburb of Los Angeles, have been racial tensions—but the real ones are development and growth

GROWING PAINS

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

THE PROBLEMS OF SUBURBAN CALIFORNIA ARE LIKE the deficiencies in the performance of a great maestro: to be horrified by them, you have to have been expecting something close to perfection. I learned this lesson on a trip I made recently to the town of Monterey Park, in the San Gabriel Valley and just a few minutes to the east of downtown Los Angeles, to watch the culmination of a campaign to remove two members of the city council from office.

The two council members had introduced, so late in a very long council meeting that only a few constituents were present, a resolution declaring that Monterey Park does not consider itself a sanctuary for illegal aliens and that English should be the official language of the United States. Naturally, when word of the resolution got out, there was a storm of protest—Monterey Park is three-fourths Asian and Hispanic. Four thousand people (in a town of 60,000) signed petitions demanding that the city council rescind the resolution, which it eventually did. Then another petition drive began, this one to hold a special election to recall the two council members; it got thou-

HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT IN MONTEREY PARK (LEFT) AND SOME OF THE NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK (BELOW)



sands of signatures too. In the days before the election the recall forces were full of stirring rhetoric about taking a stand against racism. Their descriptions of the mood in Monterey Park made frequent use of words like "hate" and "fear." I went there prepared for a replay of Freedom Summer.

The San Gabriel Valley is the butt of jokes by people who live to the west of downtown Los Angeles, because it's unfashionable and also because of its lesser weather—the valley is hotter and smoggier and too far from the ocean to get Pacific breezes. Still, compared with anyplace else, it is gorgeous, with a pale desert sky and mountains on two sides. Other than a lot of yard signs saying YES and NO, I saw no evidence that Monterey Park was anything but a calm, attractive, well-tended middle-class suburb.

This is not to say that it is a typical suburb. The *Los Angeles Times* aptly calls Monterey Park the first suburban Chinatown. In the middle seventies a Taiwanese developer named Frederic Hsieh decided to promote Monterey Park, which already had a small, well-established Japanese-American enclave, as a destination for Chinese immigrants. He bought up a lot of land and put out the word in Taiwan and Hong Kong that Monterey Park was the Chinese Beverly Hills. This, combined with economic currents in Taiwan and Hong Kong, brought a flood of Asians and Asian money into Monterey Park and the surrounding towns. The *Times* found that Monterey Park is the second most common place of settlement for Asian immigrants in the United States, after New York's Chinatown; more immigrants go there than to the Chinatowns in Los Angeles and San Francisco. About 50 percent of the population of Monterey Park is Asian. Asians own 60 percent of the land and 60 percent of the businesses in town, and they make up more than half the elementary school population. Three Chinese-language daily newspapers are published in Monterey Park. There is a Chinese-language movie theater. The commercial strips are lined with Asian businesses—Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese restaurants by the dozen, ginseng shops, Chinese bakeries, Chinese video stores, and Chinese supermarkets that have taken over the buildings where Safeway and Alpha Beta used to

SUPERMARKET, ATLANTIC BOULEVARD



be. To see a non-English-speaking, first-generation immigrant community in a prosperous suburb instead of a poor city neighborhood is a new, and initially jarring, experience.

After the polls closed on the day of the recall vote, both sides gathered at city hall, a new, perfectly maintained building, to watch the votes being counted. It was a cool, clear evening. Everyone was very polite. The pro-recall people were mostly young Chinese businessmen in impeccable suits, and the anti-recall people were mostly white senior citizens dressed in informal retirees' clothes. Both sides whiled away the time by telling incredibly tame election-abuse horror stories. A young Chinese man had had his voter-identification card scrutinized unusually carefully by a white poll watcher! Another poll watcher had asked a Chinese voter to write down his address! (When he couldn't, he was still allowed to vote.) The pro-recall forces had hired a political consultant who didn't live in Monterey Park! "This is Chicago-style politics," a resident who must not have been to Chicago lately said, according to a local paper the next day.

During the waiting at city hall I was strongly tempted to dismiss the crisis in Monterey Park as trivial. Then the ballot boxes started to come in, and it began to be clear that the recall forces would suffer a landslide defeat—the final margin was 62–38. As strongly as the recall forces, with their petition drives, had felt, the anti-recall forces must have felt even more strongly. They had out-organized the other side, and had done so with much less money. Most of the rest of the country would probably feel fortunate to have only these problems, but in Monterey Park, obviously, they look grave to everyone. Monterey Park may have no real claim on the conscience of the nation, but still it sees itself as a town in crisis.

Immigration, Development, and Politics

LOS ANGELES AS A WHOLE IS PREOCCUPIED WITH TWO related issues right now: immigration and development. In any objective comparison with other cities of its size, Los Angeles is blessed in both respects. Its immigrants fall generally into two groups: illegal aliens from Mexico, who are very poor but aren't in a position to ask for much help from the government, and Asians, who are famous for being overachievers. It is very hard to make a case that immigrants are a drain on the city. But to understand politics in Los Angeles and what is likely to dominate the city's politics for the rest of the century, it is crucial not to underestimate how seriously these issues are taken. Ten years ago the movement for Proposition 13, which strictly limits property taxation, was often portrayed by the out-of-state press as another wacky California fad; now it looks like the truest harbinger of the national politics of the eighties. The interlocking issues of immigration and development, tempting as it may be to dismiss them, may well seem the same way ten years from now.

Because Monterey Park is probably the place where im-



RIDES AT A MINI-MALL, GARVEY AVENUE

migration and development are being fought over most bitterly, it provides a good opportunity to try to parse the political consequences of both issues. The wars began there in the late seventies, when the Asian community began to be substantial, and the residents of a neighborhood called Sequoia Park started an association and waged a successful campaign for limits on new construction in the neighborhood.

Shortly afterward a citywide version of the Sequoia Park Association, called RAMP (for Residents' Association of Monterey Park), got under way. If you constructed a composite character from the RAMP leadership, that person would be over fifty-five, would have moved to Monterey Park in the 1950s from a more crowded part of Los Angeles, would have been born in the East or, more likely, the Midwest, and would have become politically active when an ugly building went up next door to his or her house. For example, Joe Rubin, the current head of RAMP, had an apartment house go up in back of his house in 1981, which took away perhaps ten degrees of a 160-degree view. Rubin, a former manager in the aerospace industry, grew up in Brooklyn, and he says that if he had wanted to see apartment buildings he could have just stayed home. RAMP is politically diverse—Rubin is a liberal Democrat, and RAMP's treasurer, Evelyn Diederich, was a Reagan alternate at the 1976 Republican Convention—but its leaders are united in the feeling that California is losing the quality that made them want to move there from far away a generation ago: an innocent, small-town pleasantness combined with a degree of opportunity that you can't find in an actual innocent small town.

In 1982 RAMP endorsed a slate of three candidates for the city council, which has five members in all. The police union, which was up for a new contract, endorsed the anti-RAMP slate and canvassed for it door to door. The anti-RAMP forces cultivated a crime-stopping image. A billboard went up that said WELCOME TO MONTEREY PARK, THE CITY WHERE CRIME PAYS. On the weekend before the election Monterey Park was blanketed with copies of a one-shot newspaper called *The Monterey Park Chronicle*, which accused the slate RAMP had endorsed of wanting to

bring legalized gambling to Monterey Park. RAMP's slate lost.

The three winners were a Chinese-American woman, Lily Chen, and two Mexican-American men, David Almada and Rudy Peralta. This meant that the Monterey Park council had a minority majority, and to the outside world it looked like a model of multiracial harmony. Chen, Almada, and Peralta had run as moderate anti-growthers, so it appeared that development wasn't an issue either. In 1985 *USA Today*, after a strenuous campaign led by Chen, named Monterey Park an All-American City.

In addition to endorsing candidates for office in 1982, RAMP's leaders had been meeting with the leadership of similar groups, especially one in Orange County and one in the San Fernando Valley, that had placed anti-growth propositions on the ballot in their towns. Out of these meetings came a petition drive that led to a special election in June of 1982 on two anti-growth propositions, one of which required that major zoning changes be put to a vote. "We don't need to be a mini-New York!" the RAMP campaign literature said. Both propositions passed overwhelmingly.

Almost from the moment they took office, Chen, Almada, and Peralta lost whatever anti-growth image they had had in Monterey Park. All three publicly opposed RAMP's anti-growth propositions; the city council they dominated immediately began to grant enough zoning variances to persuade RAMP, at least, that it was committed to inflicting a spree of indiscriminate development on the city. The two kinds of new buildings that most aroused RAMP's ire were condominiums and "mini-malls," or small shopping centers arrayed behind parking lots. Both of these are controversial throughout greater Los Angeles. The city of Los Angeles recently passed a ban on new mini-mall construction. Mini-malls are unpopular because they increase traffic and have high turnover and vacancy rates. Also, in the wake of Proposition 13, California towns are heavily dependent on sales taxes. Condos, banks, and office buildings don't generate sales tax. The stores in mini-malls have not produced substantial tax revenues either. So Monterey Park's real income from sales tax has been flat during the past decade of booming growth, though the demand for city services has increased greatly. A part of the case against development is that unless it comes in the form of large-scale retail establishments, it will cause the city to reduce services.

Most of the condos and mini-malls in Monterey Park have been built for the use of Chinese immigrants. The condos are not only crowded, they're crowded with non-English-speaking Chinese people. The stores in the mini-malls sell products specifically for Asians, and very few whites go to them. Describing the city-council meetings of the Chen era, Joe Rubin says, "They'd show slides of a condo. We'd all say, 'Horrible!' The Chinese would all say, 'Great!' They'd say, 'You have hills with nothing on them—there was *nothing* in Monterey Park before we got here.'"

Whose Town?

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, AS ASIAN IMMIGRANTS kept coming to Monterey Park and Asian businesses kept opening, it became easier to detect a strain of pure anti-Asian feeling among the whites which was not really related to development. Whites' main practical complaint is that they can no longer shop in Monterey Park. Most of the American-style grocery stores have closed, and restaurants and clothing stores catering to whites are disappearing too. J. C. Penney and Superior Pontiac (which was the biggest taxpayer in town) have recently decamped. Sentiment against "unreadable signs"—that is, signs in Chinese or Vietnamese with no English translation—has also grown. Beyond that is a feeling not of hatred but of resentment: what I heard over and over from whites was, "It isn't our town anymore" and "It isn't an American city anymore." The whites say that the Asians, who are used to living in crowded cities, have a conception of suburban life that is different from what life in Monterey Park used to be like. It involves bigger buildings, higher residential density, longer lines in stores, later hours, and more restaurants and nightclubs. The obvious affluence of many of the Asians—the custom-made suits and Mercedes sedans—attracts resentment too, especially from Monterey Park's Mexican-Americans, who are there after an arduous two-generation climb from manual labor to modest white-collar work in government or the lower ranks of big corporations.

Officially, the whites' biggest worry about the Chinese in Monterey Park is similar to the often-heard argument against bilingual education: they don't seem to be making any effort to assimilate, and if foreign-language immigrants don't assimilate, we'll end up in America with the kind of deep-seated linguistic, racial, and cultural differences that have brought other great nations to their knees. Unofficially, the worry is that the government of Taiwan is trying to orchestrate an Asian takeover of Monterey Park, possibly for some nefarious reason related to crime. The evidence for this, to the extent there is any, consists purely of unrelated straws in the wind. One council member and a former police chief have both made trips to Taiwan recently, although neither is in the habit of world travel. The same council member was present in a Chinese restaurant in Monterey Park very late one night when an exchange of gunfire caused a fish tank to shatter. Not long ago a major heroin bust took place at the port of Long Beach, twenty-two miles away, and for some reason members of the Monterey Park police force were present to assist in the arrest. All these things are whispered, not stated, but they're part of the thinking of whites who are worried about the de-Americanization of Monterey Park.

Within RAMP there has been an effort to keep the anti-development quotient high and the anti-immigration quotient low. But in the city-council elections of 1986 RAMP had trouble finding candidates, because city politics has come to seem like an onerous, time-consuming job. One

of the three candidates it endorsed, Barry Hatch, was not a member of RAMP and was more openly concerned about the Asian issue than RAMP is. A former California highway patrolman who now teaches American history in a mostly Hispanic junior high school, Hatch is a John Wayne-style barrel-chested conservative who has been troubled at home and at work by what he sees as the failure of immigrants in Southern California to adapt to American life.

The literature for the 1986 campaign was almost wholly about development, though there was a mention or two of the need for "readable signs" in Monterey Park. This time the RAMP candidates swept in, and immediately the city council passed a one-year moratorium on new construction in Monterey Park. A few weeks later Hatch, who was upset about the bilingual-education program at the school where he teaches, as well as about the signs in Monterey Park, proposed the resolution that led to the effort to recall him and his fellow council member Patricia Reichenberger. Both questions addressed by the resolution—whether Monterey Park would be a sanctuary for illegal aliens, and whether English should be the country's official language—were purely symbolic, but it was a shot across the bow of the Asians and an embarrassment to RAMP. A multiracial group called CHAMP (Coalition for Harmony in Monterey Park) was quickly formed, and it led the successful fight to have the city council rescind the resolution. When Hatch and Reichenberger stuck by the resolution, the effort to recall them got under way.

CHAMP did not get involved in the recall campaign; another group, called the Association for Better Cityhood, sprang up to lead the charge. Though its public posture was that of a crusader against racism, ABC was pretty clearly a creature of the developers, who were extremely upset about the moratorium on construction. Its leaders were an Asian insurance man and a young white man whose parents run a big real-estate investment company in Monterey Park, and most of its contributions came from Chinese-American businessmen, many of whom don't live in Monterey Park. The financial-disclosure statements of ABC are full of contributors who list their occupation as "trading" or "investments." RAMP's are full of "retired." The campaign was rough on both sides, but ABC's was rougher. For example, the city council refused a day-care center's request to increase the height of a brick wall surrounding its playground from three feet to six, and, inspired by this, ABC produced brochures showing a dastardly kidnapper leaning over a three-foot wall to lure innocent kids with a handful of candy.

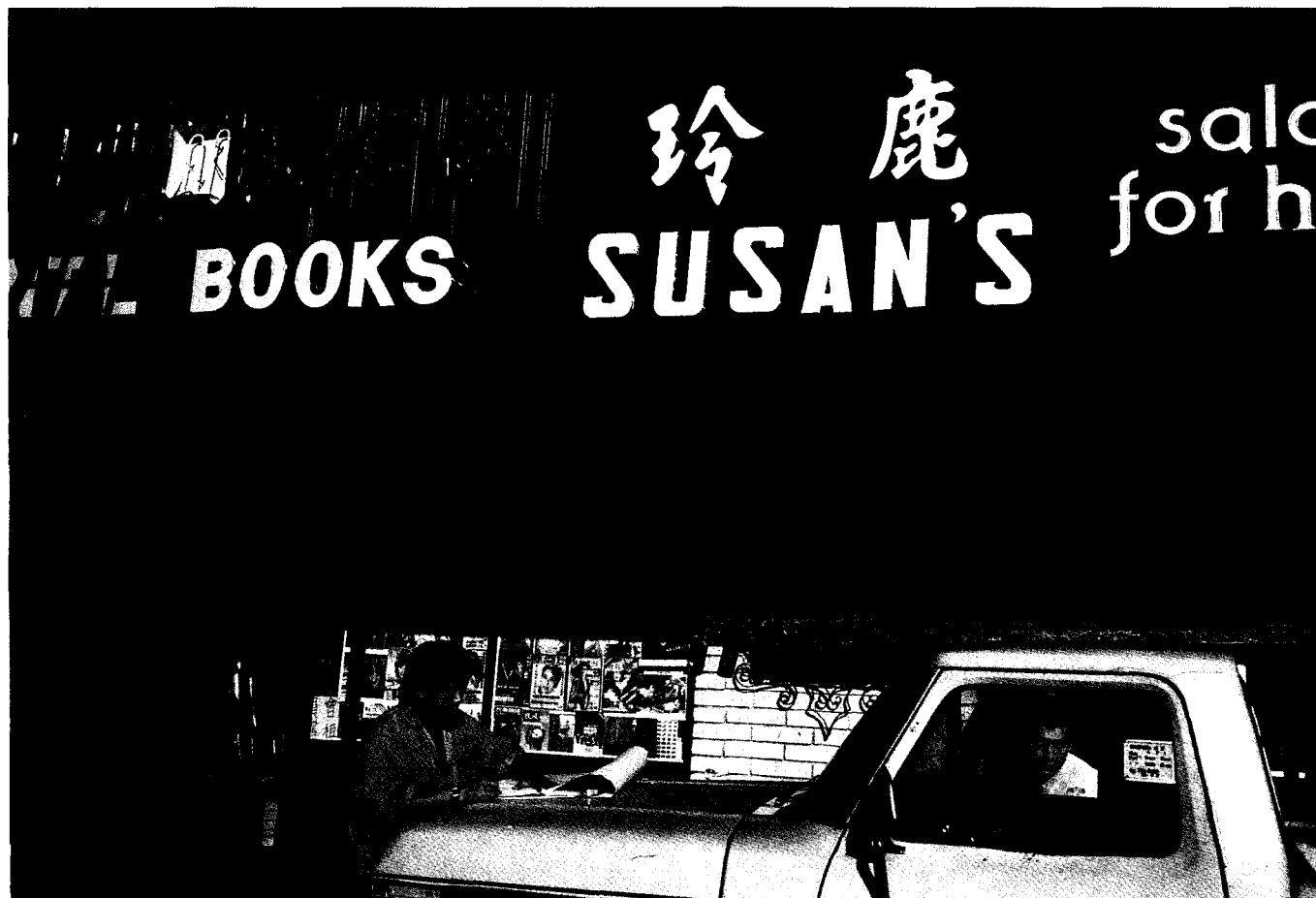
The recall forces now say that it was foolhardy to try to remove from office two people who hadn't been accused of any wrongdoing. Maybe—but what doomed them was that there really is a great deal of anti-development sentiment in Monterey Park. Mexican-Americans, who make up about a quarter of the city's population, voted heavily against recall, and quite a few Asians did too. The recall campaign erred spectacularly by sending paid Hispanic campaign workers around to the houses of Monterey Park's

assimilated, English-speaking Mexican-Americans to tell them that the city council was going to deport them, sending them back to Mexico. They knew as legal residents that there was no chance of this happening, and finding themselves challenged implicitly to choose sides between immigrants and native-born Americans, they picked the native-born side, because that's what they are.

Now the city council is in the process of implementing a plan for the future development of Monterey Park. The plan could be seen as a plot against developers who cater to the Asian market, since it restricts mini-malls and condos severely while encouraging the building of big American-style malls and automobile dealerships at the edges of

of July picnic; in 1987 the city served only hot dogs.

Of the five members of the city council, the three who were endorsed by RAMP in 1986 won't be up for re-election until 1990, and the other two, who are up for re-election this spring, can expect to be opposed by RAMP candidates. Meanwhile, the Chinese businessmen seem flummoxed. On the one hand, the two council members RAMP hopes to replace have been loyal to them, so it would seem ungrateful for the Chinese businessmen to throw these men over in favor of more attractive candidates; on the other hand, the two look like probable losers. With the opposition lacking strong candidates, it seems likely that RAMP will have its people in all five places on the council soon.



SHOPPING CENTER, GARVEY AVENUE

town. But the developers, cowed by their loss in the recall election, didn't mount any opposition to the plan, and it passed overwhelmingly in October. Today the situation in Monterey Park is a curious one. Politically, the whites are on a roll. The local Chamber of Commerce recently rejected six of seven Asians who ran for its board of directors. For several months the city council threatened to pull the permit of the biggest construction project in town—a retail and commercial building at the intersection of the two busiest streets in Monterey Park—because its stores would be almost exclusively Asian. “We want viable American name-brand stores in there,” Barry Hatch told me. In 1986 the city served hot dogs, egg rolls, and tacos at its Fourth

ECONOMICALLY AND DEMOGRAPHICALLY, THOUGH, Monterey Park is well on the way to being an Asian city, and it's hard to imagine that it won't change politically in the long run. Young whites don't settle there anymore. The children of the midwesterners who moved to Monterey Park after the Second World War mostly moved away when they grew up, often to the more exciting Los Angeles Westside. Mexican-Americans are still moving in, but there are lower-middle-class Mexican-American beachheads all over Los Angeles, whereas Monterey Park is known even across the Pacific as the place for Asians. There are now very few whites in the public school system, and more Asians than Hispanics. At Ynez Elemen-



KEEPING UP WITH THE WONGS

tary School, in the center of Monterey Park, twenty-four of the thirty-two classes are bilingual, and only three of those use Spanish as their second language.

It would be asking a lot of Monterey Park's longtime residents to expect them to accept with equanimity the complete remaking of their town that has occurred over the past decade. But it is pretty clear to anyone new in town that the Asians there are not pursuing the goal of establishing a permanently separate culture. There is no strict residential segregation in Monterey Park—all the leaders of RAMP have Chinese next-door neighbors with whom they coexist peacefully. The Asian head of the recall campaign, Stephen Tan, born in Malaysia of Chinese parents, wears a Rotary Club tie clip, runs American General Life's highest-volume agency, and accuses his political opponents of being un-American. Aside from one stabbing at a high school in a neighboring town, the schools are, compared with other suddenly integrated American public schools, remarkably peaceful. Chinese parents enroll their kids in private late-afternoon programs to teach them Chinese culture, because they're not learning it in the course of daily life.

The only dramatic difference between the Asians of Monterey Park and the members of almost every preceding immigrant group is that so many of them have money. Even the Cubans of Miami were not instantly affluent. One of two reasons for the difference is that Taiwan is the rare country whose prosperous classes encourage their children to emigrate even though they aren't directly threatened with expropriation. Taiwan is a little larger than Maryland and has a population of 19.5 million; making it big depends completely on getting into the National Taiwan University, which accepts only 3,000 students a year. There are Taiwanese in Monterey Park who have the kind of guilt-edged background—parents who were big shots in China before the revolution and are big shots in Taiwan now—that in America would almost ensure success, but they felt they had to come here to do really well. Money has bought the Asians a place in the suburbs, where they really stick out.

The Asians aren't the only source of ethnic tension in

Los Angeles. At UCLA a box for the Jewish student newspaper was set on fire last year, and the Jewish cartoonist for the school's mainstream *Daily Bruin* got a threatening call at home from a Hispanic student when he made fun of affirmative action. The violent teenage gangs in the poor parts of town have become well known. The emergence of a black and Mexican-American lower middle class has brought the drama of ethnic change to blue-collar neighborhoods up and down Southern California. A long drive around Los Angeles reveals substantial communities of Koreans, Japanese, Salvadorans, Vietnamese, and Russians, among other groups. There is, also, a substantial immigrant group that isn't gradually assimilating—namely, the illegal aliens who live in dire poverty and hoard money to take back to Mexico. Still, Los Angeles is a million miles away from the kind of exuberant ethnic-group politics that characterized New York City in the fifties and that have been chronicled by, for instance, Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. (So, for that matter, is New York City in the eighties.)

The issue in Monterey Park that looks like the short-term future of Southern California, though, is not racial tension, which I went there to find, but development. Of course, anti-development politicians will pick up on racial sentiment, but this doesn't mean that talking about development is some kind of ruse. The anti-development passion is heartfelt. The population of Los Angeles and Orange counties grew by 50 percent in the forties and by 54 percent in the fifties. Obviously, this brought transforming development on a scale far larger than the scale of what is happening in the area now. But the post-Second World War migrants to Los Angeles from the American heartland are getting old. Their tolerance for change isn't what it once was, they have plenty of time to express their dissatisfactions, and the city *has* changed. It feels like a city now, and that is exactly what the postwar migrants weren't looking for when they came to Los Angeles.

In the San Gabriel Valley, RAMP and several similar groups in other towns have formed an umbrella organization called the Citizens Alert Network, which might conceivably endorse candidates for state and national office. There are strong local residents' organizations in Los Angeles, Orange County, and the San Fernando Valley, too. Residents' groups in the canyons just north of Hollywood, Beverly Hills, and Brentwood have started an active association. These groups are unclassifiable politically, but they all favor an agenda of less traffic and less building, with perhaps an undercurrent of nativism. It is conceivable that a very large and powerful confederation of residents' organizations all over Southern California could emerge, or that a politician could use the organizations as the political base for a successful campaign for statewide or national office. If it seems strange that suburban development could have such vast consequences, remember that Ronald Reagan got his start in politics by appealing to Southern Californians whose complaints appeared to outsiders to be entirely cranky. □

Q: Why can't this veal calf walk?



A: He has only two feet.

Actually, less than two feet. Twenty two inches to be exact. His entire life is spent chained in a wooden box measuring only 22 inches wide and 56 inches long. The box is so small that the calf can't walk or even turn around.

Most people think animal abuse is illegal. It isn't. In veal factories, it's business as usual. "Milk-fed" veal is obtained by making a calf anemic. The calf is *not* fed mother's milk. He's fed an antibiotic laced formula that causes severe diarrhea. He must lie in his own excrement—choking on the ammonia gases. He's chained in a darkened building with hundreds of other baby calves suffering the same fate. All immobilized, sick, and anemic.



Toxic Veal

The reckless use of oxytetracycline, mold inhibiting chemicals, chloramphenicol, neomycin, penicillin, and other drugs is not just bad for calves. It is toxic to you.

Chloramphenicol has caused fatal bone marrow disease in people. USDA warns that chloramphenicol is used in veal calves and that "detection is extremely difficult."

Antibiotics in veal and other factory farm products create virulent strains of bacteria that wreak havoc on human health. *Salmonella* food poisoning is reaching epidemic proportions.

Veal factories maximize profits for agribusiness drug companies because they are a breeding ground for disease. To keep calves alive under such torturous conditions, they are *continually* given drugs which are passed on to consumers.

It doesn't have to be this way. And with your help, it won't be. Please, don't buy veal!

Campaign Against Factory Farming

YES! Factory farms must be stopped from misusing drugs, abusing farm animals, and destroying America's family farms. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ \$20 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

A free Consumer Alert pack is available upon request.

THE HUMANE FARMING ASSOCIATION

1550 California Street • Suite 6 • San Francisco, CA 94109

*New kinds of software have served
as advisers on the wording of a portion of this article*

THE LITERATE COMPUTER

BY BARBARA WALLRAFF

Optimism

AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, IN FORT COLLINS, about sixty miles north of Denver, the 2,200 freshmen enrolled in English-composition classes visit the Computer-Assisted Writing Center once or twice a week. They sit at the lab's terminals, type drafts of writing assignments they were given in class, run them through a series of computer programs, and, a few minutes later, collect sheafs of printouts. These contain the draft plus a dozen kinds of suggestions and analyses. The suggestions have to do with deleting, changing, or at any rate thinking about particular words, phrases, and punctuation marks that the student has used. The analyses consider the writing overall: Has the student used a lot of passive verbs? Abstractions? Very long sentences? Are the sentence patterns repetitive? What is the draft's "readability grade" (a number equal to the years of schooling a reader could be expected to need to understand the writing, as determined by a standard formula)? What is the draft's readability grade according to four slightly different formulas? The students take the printouts home, look them over, scribble notes and revisions on them, and then go back to the Computer-Assisted Writing Center to edit their work and make new printouts, which they turn in to their instructors.

Now that computers that process words and check spelling have ceased to be exotic, here come computers that process *language*—or, in the jargon, "natural language" (a term meant to distinguish languages like English and Urdu from languages like COBOL and C). Many natural-language-processing computer systems, even many kinds of them, exist today. Probably the most familiar kind responds to questions by answering them. The systems to be discussed in this article, though, respond by questioning the wording of the questions. That is, they represent progress beyond word-processing and spelling-checking toward checking grammar, usage, and writing style.

The system at Colorado State, named Writer's Workbench, is actually not very new. Writer's Workbench has been in use at the university since 1981; it was up and running by 1979 at AT&T Bell Laboratories, where the research scientists Lorinda Cherry and Nina Macdonald developed it. Compared with most computer-related things, which seem to go out of date as quickly as number-one songs do, Writer's Workbench is venerable.

The Writer's Workbench tradition at Colorado State be-

gan shortly after Professor Charles Smith, a medievalist in the school's English department, who happens also to be interested in computers, heard about the system. At that time Writer's Workbench was a bundle of twenty-three programs that technical writers at Bell Labs used. Smith called AT&T and struck a deal, whereupon he and his colleague Kate Kiefer began to adapt the programs to the different realities of freshman comp. Soon they were ready to open what was then known as the Computer Text Analysis Laboratory to a small group of freshmen who had agreed to take part in an experiment.

The purpose of the experiment, of course, was to find out whether the customized Writer's Workbench would help students improve their composition skills. Colorado State's English department has long since concluded that it does help students—and instructors. Some instructors like it because it saves them time. Others just plain like it, and a few of them have been enthusiastic enough to adapt versions of the system to new uses. Today students taking courses in English as a second language also visit the Computer-Assisted Writing Center regularly, and at a second computer lab, students in the business program develop their business-writing skills. More than sixty other universities and high schools around the country use Writer's Workbench as well.

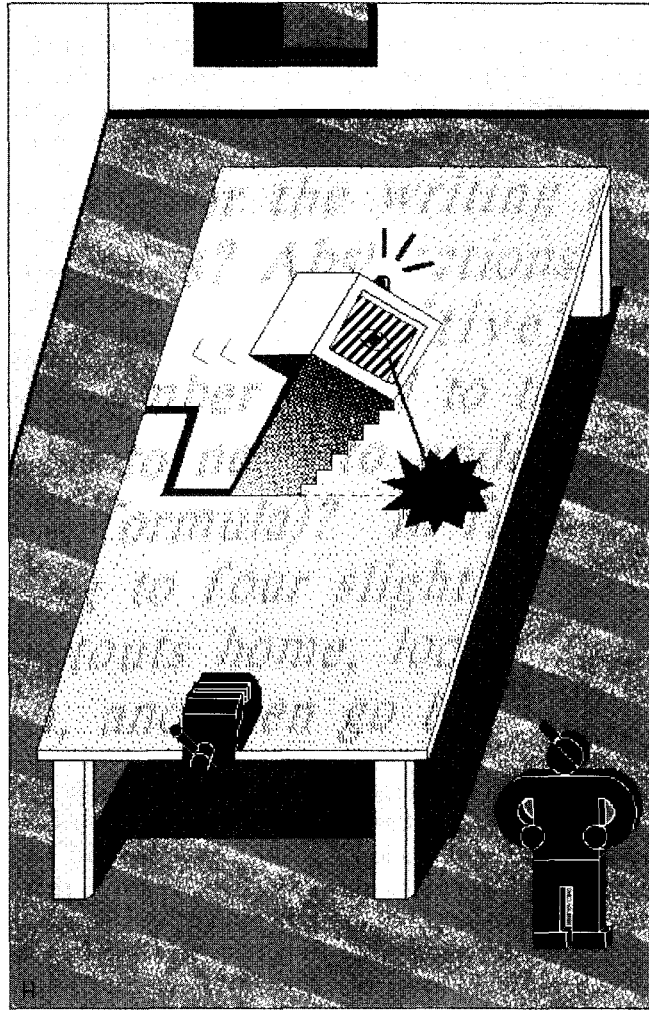
About two years ago AT&T came out with a new version of the system for technical writers, which is marketed to people rather than institutions. At the same time, it started calling the earlier version of the system the Collegiate Edition. The Technical version has some special features. For example, its users may choose to see the suggestions and analyses on screen, instead of in the form of printouts. Also, they may choose which programs to run—which kinds of help they want. Users of the Collegiate Edition get page after page of help, like it or not.

The Technical version consists of twenty-five programs to the Collegiate Edition's forty, but oddly, it takes up nearly twice as much space in the computer's memory. Both systems, though, take up too much memory to run on most personal computers. Also, Writer's Workbench requires the UNIX operating system, which few PCs have. And so in recent years computer entrepreneurs have sought to fill the gap, with "style-analyzing" programs for PCs. Most of these have been directly or indi-

rectly inspired by Writer's Workbench—as the entrepreneurs are for the most part happy to acknowledge. The developer of Grammatik II (one of two “Editor's Choice” selections among five style analyzers that were reviewed in *PC Magazine* in 1986) was a relatively enthusiastic former user of Writer's Workbench. The developers of Punctuation & Style (the other “Editor's Choice”) started with the Writer's Workbench “source code”—the system's user-unfriendly core. They simplified it and translated it to run on popular PC operating systems and to work with popular word-processing programs.

AT THE IBM THOMAS J. Watson Research Center laboratory situated in the hamlet of Hawthorne, New York, some twenty miles north and a jog east of La Guardia Airport, the computer system Critique is evolving. The brainchild of George Heidorn and his research group—Karen Jensen, Stephen Richardson, Lisa Braden-Harder, Slava Katz, and Yael Ravin—Critique is like Writer's Workbench in that it makes suggestions about writing and presents analyses of it, on printouts or on screen. It is unlike Writer's Workbench in that it is not a product. Nor, according to official IBM sources, is it even a potential product. Critique is considered an effort of pure research in the field of natural-language processing. Notwithstanding, several hundred IBM employees whose jobs involve writing and editing have leave to use the system, and as an experiment IBM has recently made it available to the writing programs at Colorado State University and the University of Hawaii.

When a visitor wants to see what Critique can do, a member of the research group calls it up and then, generally, calls up a certain letter of recommendation, which has been specially mangled for demonstration purposes. The letter appears on the color screen—white type on a black background. A few keystroke commands turn Critique loose on it. Critique scans the letter a sentence at a time, at a rate of about five seconds per sentence. The first sentence reads: “I am writing in behalf of Susan Hayes, who's application for employment you recently received.” When



the system is done with that, it draws a red line under “who's,” prints “whose” underneath, and goes on to the next sentence. It proceeds methodically to the end of the letter, underlining problem areas as it goes. Meanwhile the visitor, playing the role of a user, is free to respond to any red lines already on the screen—for instance, the one under “who's.” If he doesn't understand the problem immediately, or feels like pretending he doesn't, he can press the SHOW key on the terminal. Beneath the red line a blue box will appear. It will contain a terse explanation—“CONFUSION OF ‘WHO'S’ AND ‘WHOSE’”—and beneath that, on a yellow background, the suggested correction, “whose.”

Not everything that Critique draws a red line under is an out-and-out grammatical error. Sometimes it makes judgment calls. For example, the second sentence of the letter of recommendation begins, “Because I

have been her manager for more than three years,” and Critique underlines all of that (the sentence concludes, “I feel that I know her well enough to recommend her without reservation for your opening”). Press the key to see what's the matter and the blue box will pop up with the message “SENTENCE TOO LONG/Consider turning the highlighted portion into an independent sentence./Omit the first highlighted word, and, if appropriate, use a conjunct (e.g., ‘however,’ ‘consequently’) at the beginning of the second sentence.”

Sometimes a user, having read certain of the messages that appear in the blue box, will experience an internal conflict. The user may, for example, suddenly feel that Critique is a self-important mechanical meddler, that his own judgment about sentence length is wholly adequate, and that if a person is unable to read with ease the sentence in question, then that person is of subnormal intelligence. The user is always free to disregard Critique's advice and leave the sentence as is. Here, impelled by this feeling, he may be ready to do just that. Then again, he may recognize that the system means no personal affront but rather was created—after considerable nontrivial research—to be a tireless helper and guide. He may feel humbled by the combined majesty of technology and well-

intentioned, multicolored advice. He would like at least to be fair. He is ready to press the SHOW key again.

Now a whole screenful of explanatory prose appears. In this case, first comes praise for the clarity, precision, and utility of short sentences. Beneath that there's a little chart showing the average length of the sentences used for technical instructions in manuals (fifteen words—the threshold at which Critique begins to object to too-long sentences, in any kind of prose), business letters (nineteen to twenty words), and academic papers and books (twenty-two to twenty-three words). Then the user is informed that “it is possible to reset the threshold value for sentence length. . . .” The lesson concludes with a bit of information about the grammatical nature of the sentence in question and a paraphrase of the advice that was given in the blue box.

At this point the user does whatever he wants with the sentence and proceeds to the next red underline.

GILBERT SHARER DOESN'T SAY SO, BUT THERE MUST be moments when he envies the user who may do whatever he wants with a sentence. Sharer works in the technical-writing department of the Murray Ohio Manufacturing Company, which manufactures lawn mowers in Brentwood, Tennessee, ten miles south of the heart of Nashville. He, his colleagues, and their fellow technical writers at more than two dozen other organizations around the country use the Smart Expert Editor system, a.k.a. “Max.” For most of them, Max isn't just an adviser—its word is law. Max is customized for each company that buys it. Companies typically buy it to work on owner's and repair manuals. Typically, what Max doesn't approve must be revised and then run through the system again—and then maybe revised and run through again. What it does approve is set into type. The text will have earned a readability grade of eight or less, meaning that a reader with an eighth-grade education should be able to understand it easily. It's possible, as part of the customization process, to set this threshold lower—but not higher. The Smart Expert Editor was developed by John M. Smart, the president of Smart Communications, Inc., of New York City. “We are a cult,” Smart says cheerfully. “Either you love this thing or you hate it.”

Gilbert Sharer doesn't hate Max. He sees its usefulness for lawn-mower manuals and says he'd like to see what it could do with income-tax forms. But neither does he love it without reservation. “You lose a lot of the meaning of the words,” he says. “For literary use, I wouldn't like it.”

Each Max system uses a dictionary, typically containing 2,500 to 7,500 words, that Smart Communications has customized for the purpose at hand. The dictionary for the Murray Company's system includes *motor*, *handles*, *blades*, and so forth. In that dictionary each of these words has exactly one meaning: a lawn mower has blades to cut grass with, and so the grass may not also have blades in Murray's Max. (About half a dozen exceptions to this rule occur in

the standard Max dictionary. Practicality dictates that the system allow *light*, for example, to refer not just to weight but also to color and to brightness.) The dictionaries for all the systems, of course, include basics like prepositions, articles, conjunctions, numbers, and forms of verbs like *be* and *have*.

The 2,500 to 7,500 words in the dictionary are the only ones that the company's technical writers will be allowed to use. (Linguistic researchers have demonstrated that an average person has about 45,000 words in his “reading-recognition” vocabulary; a typical desk-size dictionary contains more than 150,000 words, and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* 460,000.) The system will recognize other words, but only in order to object to them. It flags indefinite words and phrases (like *things* and *a lot*) and asks for definite “nomenclature” or measurements instead. It objects to contractions, acronyms, and “useless” words. It is also particular about how the words it does approve are used, objecting to long-windedness, passive verbs, long sentences, complicated sentences, complicated or incorrect punctuation, and more. In short, Max is a martinet—though it would object to the name.

The limitations that Max imposes on vocabulary and syntax have a special appeal for companies that do business abroad: Max's output can be translated into other languages automatically. Companion programs exist for translating Max-approved English into five languages—six if you count separately the Brazilian and Portuguese versions of Portuguese. Other programs do partial translations into eight more languages, including Japanese, Chinese, Swedish, Turkish, and Thai, speeding along the work of the eventual human translator. But, according to John Smart, the “product-liability crisis” is responsible for most of his sales. “Companies get sued for all sorts of things because the instructions aren't clear,” he says. The requirement that Max's output have a readability grade of eight or less is one feature designed to forestall lawsuits. Also, at every mention of a dangerous machine part, such as a lawn mower's blades, or anything else that has special potential for attracting litigation, Max sets the terminal screen flashing and blinking, and refers the writer to a rule book that comes with the system. There he is reminded to recommend caution—and to do it in simple words and in the active voice.

TYPE “JENNY WANTED TO GO PUNK BUT HER FATHER put his foot down” on the terminal for the Rina system, at the General Electric Research and Development Center, in Schenectady, New York, and you'll get the response “He put his foot on the floor?” Respond in turn, “No. He put his foot down,” and Rina (which is a “personal” name, not an acronym) will come back with “He tried to block her plan?”

Rina, which, like Critique, isn't a product, is something of an alter ego for its Israeli-born creator, Uri Zernik, who began developing Rina at the Artificial Intelligence Labo

ratory at the University of California at Los Angeles. He says he responded in much the same way the first time he heard "put his foot down," after moving to this country eight years ago. "My ultimate objective is to make a computer behave just like a person—to succeed where people succeed, to make the interpretations that people make, wrong or right." The system's first response, above, is the kind of wrong interpretation that pleases Zernik.

Actually, Rina would no longer respond in this way to sentences containing "put his foot down," unless Zernik erased the phrase from its memory to see what would happen in new contexts, because "put his [or her] foot down" is one of about two hundred figures of speech that Rina has at least partly "acquired." Zernik considers that Rina has acquired a new phrase only when it—like a conscientious foreign-born person learning idioms—can distinguish a correct usage from a syntactically or conceptually incorrect one. For example, you don't put your foot down "on" or "to" or "from" or "against" someone, nor do you "put down your foot." And Jenny could not put her foot down about something her father had in mind: it is necessary for the person doing the putting to be in a position of authority.

Rina's ability to recognize figures of speech and derive their actual meanings is only by the way. Rina is primarily designed to search for a particular kind of meaning in words, and to ask for advice when it doesn't find such meaning. Rina "tries to extract plans and goals from sentences," Zernik says simply. Rina is concerned more with the meaning of text than with its grammar. The system associates whole clauses with "linguistic" and "situation" patterns, most of which are somehow relevant to the plans and goals of individuals. For example, "Jenny wanted to go punk but her father put his foot down" would match the linguistic pattern "Person 1 wanted something or other] but Person 2 [did something or other]." In this pattern wanted" is likely to be introducing a goal of Person 1's and "but" is a signal that Person 2 is probably going to interfere. The sentence would also match a situation pattern in which Person 2, Jenny's father, has authority

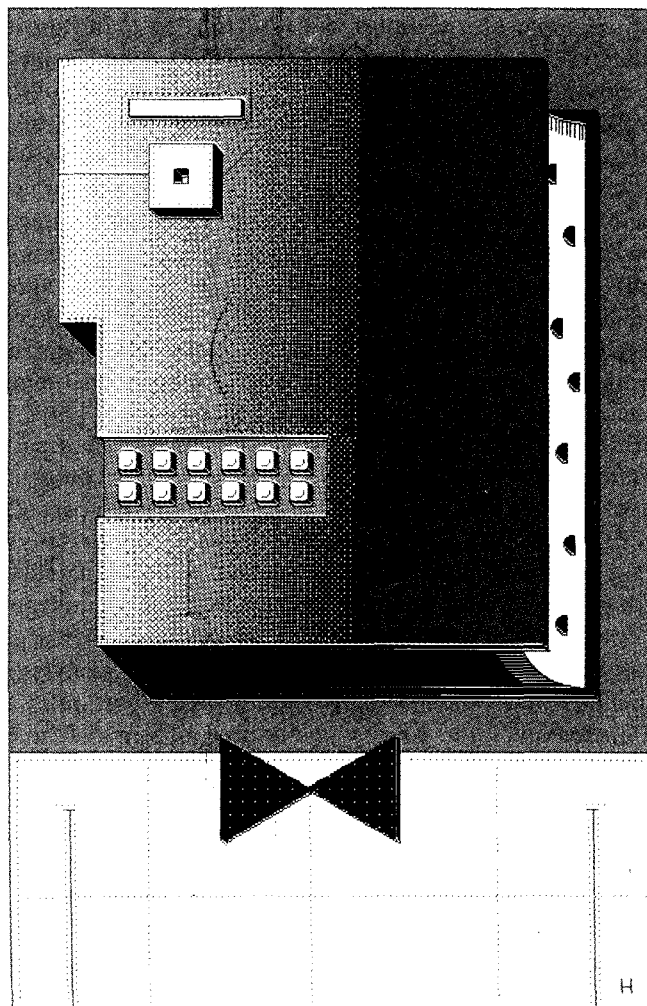
over Person 1—thereby suggesting a bit about the possible nature of his response. Because "put his foot down," taken literally, is not a good match for any existing pattern for the reaction of an authority figure against a plan, Rina begins generating questions—or, actually, successive hypotheses about the meaning of the phrase, which are represented on screen by examples intended to test the hypotheses, followed by question marks. Thus "He tried to block her plan?"

Zernik likes to work with figurative phrases in part, he says, because many of them "encapsulate something about plans and goals," and in part for what seem to be anthropomorphic reasons. He says that he, too, is still constantly acquiring new English figures of speech, a process that helps him program Rina to respond the way a person would. Also, Zernik likes the fact that the meaning of figurative phrases cannot be found in their individual words. "The learning task is not just to learn 'he put his foot down,'" Zernik says. "This task is very easy. The task is to have the correct syntax and to extract the meaning of the phrase."

A number of natural-language-processing researchers small enough to count on your fingers is responsible for developing the four computer systems I have by now sketched. The number of members of the Association for Computational Linguistics, an international professional

organization in the field, is above 2,000, according to Donald Walker, a researcher for Bell Communications Research, who is a former president of the ACL and now its secretary-treasurer. Membership in the ACL has quadrupled over the past decade, an increase that Walker believes parallels the growth of the field as a whole.

This army of researchers has been developing natural-language-processing systems of many kinds. There are systems that can summarize text. There are systems that can summarize selectively, finding references to particular topics in, say, a month's worth of newspapers and recording the gist of what is said about those topics. There are systems that can respond in plain English to questions typed in plain English. There are systems that can respond in spoken English to spoken English. There are systems



that can translate into German or Japanese and back again.

And there are limitations, more or less severe, on the abilities of all these systems. None of them can accept as input all the kinds of English that a person could be expected to accept, or understand—including much that is sloppy or ungrammatical. Nor can any of them generate as output a wide range of reliably grammatical, idiomatic English. Those two steps, one right after the other, amount to something like the ability to solve writing problems. So progress toward a system for scanning all the medical journals and summarizing the developments in a given specialty, or one for answering the questions of naval officers about the condition of their vessel, or one that will give stock quotes over the phone, is also progress toward a system able to correct sloppy English. And progress toward a system able to catch lapses from grammar, idiom, and clarity has implications extending to the far reaches of society.

Pessimism

“TWENTIETH-CENTURY ELECTRONICS HAS ALREADY turned some underlying ideas about what is the stamping ground of the mind and nothing else on it’s head. Before very recently, mathematical abstraction computing ability was one of the things that made us most unique, and that was a comfort. These days there is something useful, instead, that computers exist and their a lot better at computing than us.”

I wrote that paragraph to use as a test. Or, rather, I wrote a paragraph and then muddled it up in ways that, I imagined, would give Writer’s Workbench, Critique, Max, and Rina things to do and would demonstrate their individual strengths and weaknesses. Anyone can see that the paragraph needs help. An alert grammar school student would be able to solve some of the problems, though it would take an empathic professional editor—or maybe a mind reader—to cope with others. If those hypothetical persons represent points on a scale of editing ability, where are the computers on that scale? Which errors and infelicities can they catch, and why do they fail to catch others?

AT&T’s Writer’s Workbench, Technical version, churned out thirteen pages of suggestions for and analyses of the paragraph. The output was presented under headings that indicated which of the system’s twenty-five programs was reporting in. That is, the spelling checker made its report under the heading “Spelling,” the punctuation checker’s report came under “Punctuation,” and so on. Those two programs and a “grammar” checker (which, as the text under the “Grammar” heading notes, looks only for split infinitives and incorrect articles) didn’t find any errors.

The program responsible for “Word Choice” suggested omitting the “very” in “Before very recently” and replacing “one of the” with “a” or “one” alone, and “most unique” with “unique” alone. If I’d made those changes

and run the text through again, the program would have advised me that *unique* tends to be misused and overused and that I might be better off with *unusual* or *rare*.

I flipped through to the analyses. At the top of the first page appeared a caveat, in capital letters: “BECAUSE YOUR TEXT IS SHORT (<2000 WORDS & <100 SENTENCES). THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS MAY BE MISLEADING”—reasonable enough, as far as it goes. Below that, and on subsequent pages, I read: “The Kincaid readability formula predicts that your text can be read by someone with 13 or more years of schooling, which is rather high. . . . In this text 33% of the sentences are complex and 0% are simple. [The other 67 percent were counted as compound or compound-complex sentences.] These percentages should be closer together. . . . You have appropriately limited your use of passives and nominalizations. . . .’ And on and on for ten pages.

I was fascinated by all this. But ultimately the sheaf of analyses began to look like a crowd cheering a naked emperor as he parades down the boulevard. Writer’s Workbench, though, doesn’t know that story. In fact, it hasn’t a clue about what any text means. Its analyses are done on the basis of syntax, or sentence structure, and take no account of semantics, or the meanings of the words that make up the structure.

Why didn’t any of the programs object to—at least—the “it’s” for “its,” in “on it’s head,” and the “their” for “they’re” in “their a lot better at computing than us” (Among the further problems I’m disregarding here is that the “it’s” *really* should be a “their,” because the antecedent is “ideas”: “turned some underlying ideas . . . on it head.” Several singular nouns come between the pronoun and its true, plural antecedent, and so, clearly, a system that doesn’t take meaning into account will be hard-pressed to resolve this agreement problem.) The punctuation and spelling checkers didn’t object, because each of these would be a legitimate word in other contexts.

The most powerful component of Writer’s Workbench is a program, named Parts, that classifies the words in the text according to their parts of speech. A user can see the direct result of this program’s work on a printout of the text annotated with the part of speech that the program judges each word to be. Parts is 95 percent accurate on text at elementary-school readability levels and 90 percent accurate on text written by college freshmen. But it’s the indirect results that really matter. The output from Parts is the input for the other analysis programs, which use it to determine what proportion of a given text’s verbs are passive infinitive, or forms of “to be”; what proportion of the sentences are simple, complex, compound, and compound complex; and so on. (None of the style-analyzing programs designed specifically for personal computers has a feature comparable to Parts, and so none can do the elaborate analyses that Parts makes possible.)

Parts, though, never objects to anything. All it does is classify the words that are in the text. This is not an easy job. Many words in English can function as any of several

parts of speech (*that*, for a particularly devilish example, can be an adjective, a relative pronoun, an adverb, or a conjunction). For all such words the program, having no information about meaning, must “guess” the part of speech on the basis of what parts of speech the other words in the sentence are. The other words, of course, may also be ones that function as any of several parts of speech.

In a way, Parts did pass judgment on the incorrect “it’s,” in “on it’s head”: it failed to select the sequence of a preposition, a pronoun, a form of the verb *be*, and a noun as the likeliest one for the phrase. It chose instead to interpret “head” as an adjective (as in “head coach”), making the phrase “on it’s head” grammatically equivalent to the “on” phrase in “Keep your mind on what’s important.”

BUT IT WAS MOSTLY for Critique’s sake that I misused “it’s” and “their” in the “Twentieth-century electronics” paragraph, made the “it’s” disagree in number with its putative antecedent “ideas,” and put an “us” where a “we” ought to be. IBM’s Critique doesn’t just determine parts of speech; it goes on to “parse,” or diagram, the sentences. This is quite a significant advance. It allows Critique (and other natural-language-processing systems with parsers, of which there are now quite a few) to entertain, as it were, suspicions about words and word relationships that Writer’s Workbench must take on faith. Indeed, Critique did flag the “it’s.” It also flagged the “most unique.”

And that was all it had to say in the way of line-by-line commentary, though it did produce a one-page analysis and a set of not entirely accurate sentence diagrams.

Critique had the *potential* to catch the misused “their” and the “us” that should have been “we.” However, Critique being a work in progress, the research group hadn’t written those rules yet, and there was little urgency for the group to write them, since no plans exist to turn Critique into a marketable product. Rather than writing new rules similar to ones already in the system (for instance, the rule for when to flag *who’s* and *whose*), George Heidorn told me, “we concentrate on solving interesting research problems.”

Parsing sentences has been an extremely interesting research problem. Critique fails to generate a sentence diagram, or parse, about 20 percent of the time. Much of the rest of the time, the system generates multiple parses for a single sentence. Here the tricky part is picking out the right one.

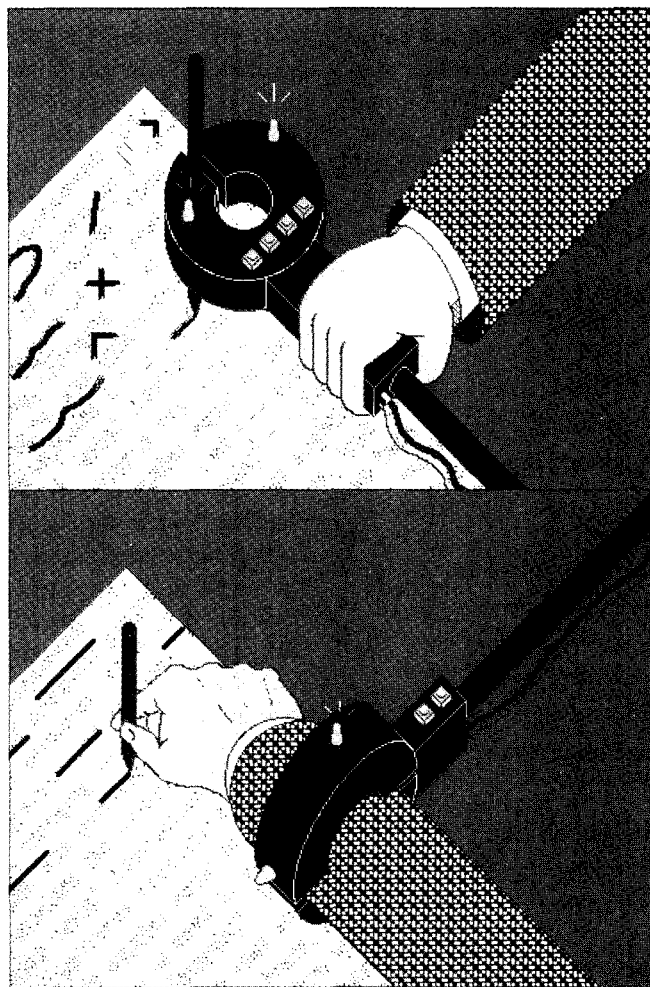
Critique, like Writer’s Workbench, does its work on the basis of syntax, making inferences from the way the parts of speech in a sentence fit together—or the way what might be the parts of speech fit together. The syntax of even a sentence as simple as “Time flies like an arrow” permits several possible interpretations by a machine that

lacks information about meaning. Maybe “time” is the verb and the sentence is a command. And then, “like an arrow” (in informal usage) might modify either the noun or the verb—whichever is which. Or maybe “like” is the verb, with “flies” as its subject and “arrow” as its object, and “time” a noun-adjective.

A technical report presented in 1982 by William Martin, Kenneth Church, and Ramesh Patil, all then at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, explored the scope of the multiple-parse problem. (In doing so, they used a syntactic parser different from the one that is built into Critique.) The researchers reported that when they ran about 500 sentences of ordinary business English through their parser, eight of them resulted in more than 300 parses apiece. The record was a jaw-dropping 958 possible parses, for the sentence “In

as much [sic] as allocating costs is a tough job I would like to have the total costs related to each product.”

I haven’t seen what Critique makes of that sentence, but I did see it diagram “Test results show that sand filters produce more even results”—also a doozy, since there isn’t a single word in it that is invariably one part of speech. When a sentence has multiple parses, Critique notes that fact on screen and presents a diagram of the parse that is its best guess, according to the rules that it follows. For this sentence its best guess was that the main verb was “test” and that the sentence was a command. Karen Jensen manually overrode that, informed the system that “show” was the main verb, and asked for the parse that was likeliest in



light of that. The diagram it came back with had “filters” and “results” as additional verbs and “produce” as a noun.

Somewhere around “mathematical abstraction computing ability” Gilbert Sharer paused in typing the “Twentieth-century electronics” paragraph on his terminal to warn me, “Max will tear this to pieces.” A moment later Max proceeded to do just that. The printout announced that the system had found a total of twenty-four errors in the paragraph’s sixty-eight words, for an error rate of 35 percent. (The highest total word count I can arrive at, by counting “Twentieth-century” and “it’s” as two words apiece, is sixty-six—but that’s a side issue.)

“Twentieth-century” started the paragraph off on the wrong foot: “USE FIGURES SEE-33,” the printout commanded. Sharer translated: section 33 of the rule book that comes with Max presents rules for when to spell out numbers and when not to. In “some underlying ideas about what is the stamping ground of the mind,” Max branded

“underlying” and “what is” both “AWKWARD CONSTRUCTION SEE-5.” And then Max considered “stamping” (in “the stamping ground of the mind”) to be an unacceptable substitute for “marking,” and “computing” (in “mathematical abstraction computing ability” and in “their a lot better at computing”) and “computers” (in “computers exist”) to be unacceptable substitutes for “calculating” and “calculators.” Max objected to “recently” (in “Before very recently”) and “a lot” (in “their a lot better”) on the grounds that each should be replaced by a measurement, “things” (in “mathematical abstraction computing ability was one of the things that made us most unique”) on the grounds that it should be replaced by proper nomenclature, and “useful” (in “these days there is something useful, instead”) on the grounds that it is useless. There were other error messages, the most common of which was “NOT IN DICTIONARY.” Words that aren’t in the dictionary, of course, are not allowed. Two of the words that triggered this response were “ideas” and “mind.”

It’s one thing for Jenny’s father to put his foot down, Uri Zernik explained; it’s quite another for twentieth-century electronics to turn underlying ideas on its, or their, or any, head. He declined even to present the test paragraph to Rina. “The program would not understand it at all,” he told me. For one thing, “Rina would say, ‘Please tell me what “Twentieth-century” means. Please tell me what “electronics” means.’ It’s not just words you have to put into this computer: What does ‘electronics’ *mean*?” Explaining “electronics” to Rina would involve finding the appropriate place for it in the system’s diagrams of conceptual representations and marking out the relationships between the new concept, electronics, and concepts already present in the diagrams, such as television and computers and signals—provided those were present, and they are not. Rina would have other problems, too, with the “Twentieth-century electronics” paragraph. There are no people in it, and it is only tangentially related to plans and goals. To Zernik, this was almost a philosophical failing. Certainly, the language that Rina is designed to respond to is about people—or characters, like Jenny and her father—and their goals.

Zernik did, though, home right in on the figure of speech “turned . . . on its head.” The phrase was evidently new to him, and he asked me to use it in other sentences. Eventually we agreed that it had to do with the up setting of predictions—whereupon Zernik pointed out that predictions bear some relation to goals. But after we had discussed the phrase further, he said, clearly disappointed, “Maybe it’s not plans and goals but beliefs here.”

Until they acquire a complex internal representation of meaning—in the jargon, this is called a knowledge base or knowledge representation—computer systems are going to miss not only the plans and goals of characters but also many common, and seemingly simple, writing problems. Whether or not the adjectives that precede a noun should have commas between them depends on the adjectives’ meaning (“the big, expensive computer and the big

WRITING POEMS

This morning I watched
the pale green cones of the rhododendrons
opening their small pink and red blouses—

the bodies of the flowers
were instantly beautiful to the bees, they hurried
out of that dark place in the thick tree

one after another, an invisible line
upon which their iridescence caught fire
as the sun caught them, sliding down.

*

Is there anything more important
than hunger and happiness? Each bee entered
the frills of a flower to find

the sticky fountain, and if some dust
spilled on the walkways of the petals
and caught onto their bodies, I don’t know

if the bees know that otherwise death
is everywhere, even in the red swamp
of a flower. But they did this

with no small amount of desperation—you might say: love.

*

And the flowers, as daft as mud, poured out their honey.

—Mary Oliver

white computer”), and sometimes on context (“Put the big expensive computer next to the small expensive computer”). Whether a particular relative clause should begin with a comma and *which*, no comma and *that*, or (the rare “exceptional” pattern) no comma and *which* depends on meaning. Dozens—probably hundreds—of similar meaning-related problems lurk at the line-by-line level of English. And of course meaning is essential to larger writing considerations, such as whether a given sentence, paragraph, or document is well organized and makes sense. To be effective writing advisers at any level, then, computers must compute not just structure but also meaning.

Researchers—Uri Zernik, for example—are working on it. The great problem they face is that words are able to carry so many different kinds of meaning. The sentence “Mr. Smith visited a restaurant” implies food and waiters and a check and all kinds of things that are not present in the actual words but that a human reader will know to take for granted in the subsequent text. Also, a human reader will know which of the usual implications to disregard if the text specifies that Mr. Smith went into the restaurant to ask for the time or that Mr. Smith is an inspector for the board of health. Quite complicated sequences can be implied in quite simple sentences. A favorite plans-and-goals-related example of Uri Zernik’s: “Wilma was hungry. She opened the Michelin guide.”

People seem to be able to take in explicit and implicit meanings more or less simultaneously. But no one knows exactly how we do it. No one can even say exactly what we’re doing: a satisfactory list or model of everything that a person might be expected to know has yet to be created. “Knowledge is not just a data base,” says Mark Underwood, the manager of product development at Computer Cognition, a San Diego company that is working to create a natural-language-processing system modeled on human cognition. Underwood observes, wryly, that although today’s computer systems are barely able to differentiate between *it’s* and *its* or other homonyms, “people who can do that right out of school come pretty cheap.” He adds, “We tend to forget how gifted the average person is in terms of knowledge representation.”

Perspective

TODAY’S NATURAL-LANGUAGE-PROCESSING SYSTEMS can do marvelous things: summarize, answer questions, translate. As a rule, though, a given system will be able to recognize, and respond to, the explicit meaning of very literal and particular kinds of text or else very particular kinds of meanings in more varied text. That is, the most complex of today’s systems have depth or breadth but not both.

In recent months I have asked quite a few people associated with natural-language processing how long they thought it would be before computers could *really* edit text—that is, could vet all kinds of text as well as an emathic professional editor can. Their answers ranged from

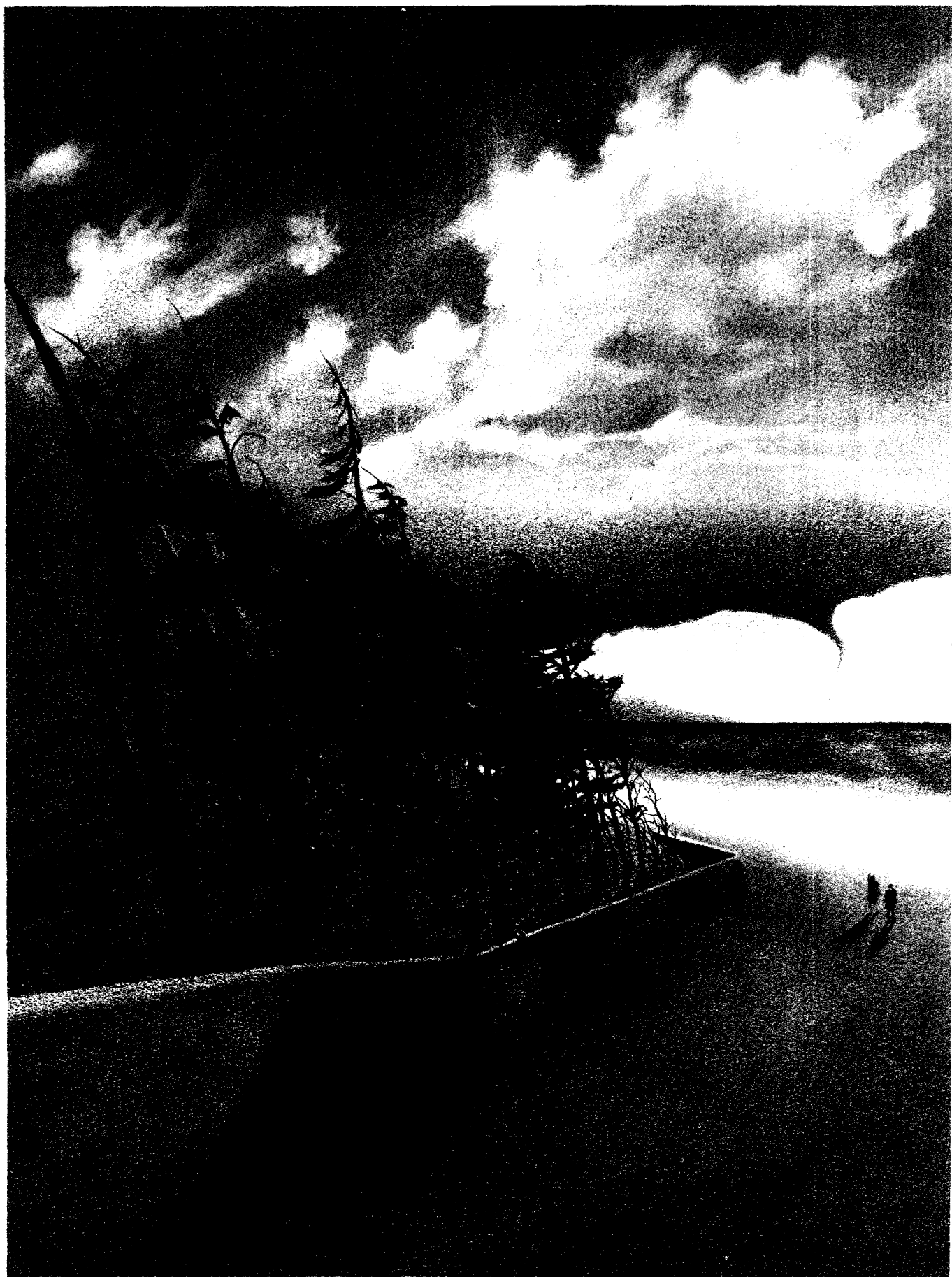
“the end of the millennium” to “maybe never.” Terry Winograd, an associate professor of computer science and linguistics at Stanford University and, at age forty-one, one of the grand old men of natural-language processing, told me flatly, “It’s not in sight.” He added, “I’m not saying it will never happen, but it’s not something that can be done by improving and tuning up existing systems.” What the problem boils down to, as he sees it, is that editing is a process of making interpretations and decisions, and “that’s not something that computers are good at.”

Electronics has already begun revising our language. In making it possible for people, businesses, and governments to zip spoken and written words around the world, electronics has made it necessary for them to do so. Today when we demand information or action quickly, we mean within seconds, or perhaps hours—not days or weeks from now. The most important consequence for the world, probably, is that people who dispense information or make decisions—spokesmen, journalists, diplomats, executives—have proportionally less time to think. The important consequence for the language is that they have less time to decide how to express their thoughts. We are more promptly but less judiciously informed.

In making it possible for us to zip pictures around the world, electronics has made that necessary too, and has lightened the burden of description that words carry—or, from another point of view, usurped the craft and the art of description. At the same time, techno-talk, the metalanguage of machines, has infiltrated the rank and file of English. We have new words, like *microwave* and *televise* and *modem*. We have old words in new senses and new combinations, like *remote* and *terminal* and *user-friendly*. We have some new coinages in still newer forms, like *ATM*, *TV*, *CD*, *VCR*, *VDT*. We have new metaphors and analogies: new verbal inputs and outputs, a rewiring of our linguistic circuits. Only Luddites will insist that such change must be stopped—or will imagine that it can be.

Twentieth-century electronics has—as Writer’s Workbench, Critique, Max, and Rina have all failed to help me say—already overturned certain comfortable assumptions about where the unique provinces of the human mind begin and end. Until well into this century the ability to manipulate mathematical abstractions set us apart from every other creature and thing on the planet, and that was comforting. Today there are computers, far abler at computing than we, and this is useful.

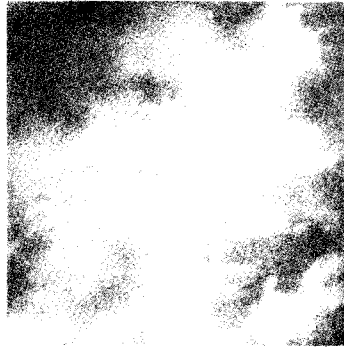
Before it becomes possible for computers to use the kind of English that we use, we will need to get to know our language, and our mental processes, much better than we know them now. And as we learn how to delegate to machines those human tasks that turn out not to be beyond their grasp after all, we can hardly fail to gain new respect for the ultimate complexity of language and thought. Paradoxically, language and thought have allowed us to plumb countless worlds—real, possible, and wholly imaginary—but we are still far from fathoming language and thought themselves. □



A Short Story

GOD'S TYPHOON

BY JOHN HERSEY



IN THE LOT NEXT TO OURS AT THE SUMMER RESORT OF Peitaiho, at the foot of the hill that swooped down toward Rocky Point and the "American beach" and the sparkling North China Sea, Dr. Wyman had planted his famous arboretum. It boasted every conifer that could survive in that slice of the temperate zone. I was a small boy; I didn't know the names of any of the trees, but I was in awe of the grove. I did not dare go into it. Even Dr. Wyman's three sons had been strictly ordered to stay out. Huge NO TRESPASSING signs in English and Chinese capped its shoulder-high stone walls. Only Dr. Wyman and his invited guests, who were few and far between, were allowed entry—besides, of course, Chinese coolies to tend the grounds.

On days when I was bored, I used to sit on a boulder in our lot and contemplate that exquisite little forest. Salty sea breezes off the Gulf of Peichili had gnarled many of the pines and firs and spruces and cedars and yews and had caused all their feather-bearing boles to tend to the west, toward the plains and mountains beyond the hill, as if they yearned for the bone-dry air that sometimes came all the way down from the Gobi Desert. On foggy days even I could sense something of the mystery in evergreen shapes that had entranced so many Chinese painter-philosophers. Through the years the trees had woven a brownish-green carpet on the ground, and after a rain a delicious fragrance of resin and sweet gum spilled over onto our land.

Quite often I saw Dr. Wyman strolling alone along the paths among the trees, with his head thrown back as if to drink. Sometimes I saw his mouth moving. Possibly he was rehearsing his dreadful sermons.

His son Billy Wyman and I both had brothers who were

old enough to be Boy Scouts, while we two were still only Wolf Cubs. North China reverberated that summer with the cannonfire of warlords' battles, and the Scouts were constantly being mobilized, in their insufferable (to us) uniforms with red kerchiefs and merit badges all up and down their arms and chests, to run errands for the 15th U.S. Infantry and the Royal Marines. Those troops were bivouacked to protect foreign persons and their property at this heavenly enclave on Chinese soil, where Chinese persons—except, naturally, for house servants and coolies and donkey tenders—were unwelcome.

Furious at being kept at home under our mothers' wings while the big boys were out defending us, Billy and I spent every minute we could in and around a pup tent, defending an imaginary world of our own. I played soldier and he, being a Brit, played marine. Our good guy was the warlord Wu Pei-fu, our sworn enemy the Japanese-supported Chang Tso-lin. We were very brave but not brave enough to pitch our tent near Billy's house. We were both scared of his father.

The Reverend Doctor Josephus P. Wyman had remarkable gifts of body and mind. He seemed as tall and broad and dangerous, coming along one of the resort's sandy roads, as a lorry, and when he ground his jaws in a grimace of effort, as he often did, his chin and throat muscles bulged so much that you expected a bullfrog's song to come out from between his huge, pipesmoke-tinted teeth. Billy said he had once scored six hundred and seventeen runs at one stretch as a cricketer for Oxford. His interminable sermons at the Union Church came at us in an insistent singsong, half whine, half roar, and my restlessness in the pews on those Sabbath mornings was edged with dread.

Dr. Wyman preached a God I couldn't quite see in my mind, and certainly couldn't love. I dimly pictured some kind of Grandfather, who dealt out to bad people their awful "just deserts," which I thought must be poisoned food at the end of delicious meals. Grandfathers seemed mysterious and rather awesome to me anyhow, because I had never seen my two, both of whom lived back in the States. The Grandfather Dr. Wyman talked about was suspicious and angry, for no reason I could perceive. Shouldn't He be wildly happy over having created, among other wondrous things, our ravishing summer resort? Yet this Grandfather apparently spent most of His time on the lookout for ways of punishing everybody's "trespasses" and "sins of pride." Dr. Wyman harped on sins of pride. After his sermons I gloomily wondered about mine. Something to do with merit badges? Skill in swimming the Australian crawl?

Dr. Wyman was a polymath; we could imagine no subject on which he could not bury an adversary under the ever-spreading lava of his knowledge. His house—a queer, ugly block of stone with a flat roof, which he had designed himself—was like an untidy museum, crammed with all sorts of tools and instruments invented by man in order to assist in the study of God's manifest ingenuities. Strewn about on workbenches, parlor chairs, the dining-room table, and even his poor wife's sewing machine and ironing board were Bunsen burners, microscopes, several of the latest cameras, a delicate balance with tiny scalepans, a stereoscope, numerous magnifying glasses, racks of test tubes holding various ominous-looking fluids; scattered here and there were sets of pipettes and syringes and beakers, of scalpels and chisels and dissecting knives, slide rules and compasses and tape measures, electromagnets and inductor coils and Leyden jars. Only Dr. Wyman's Deity knew what else—but oh! also a crystal radio capable of picking up Peking, a telegraph key on which he had conversed in Morse code with Vladivostok, and, most majestic of all, right in the center of the parlor, causing some awkwardness in group conversation there, a seven-foot-long telescope that he sometimes lugged up onto the roof at night to make sure the spheres were still revolving in God's good order.

Though known for his brilliance, he was also a jovial man. My mother had said that his laughter was as loud as the roar of Niagara Falls. Adults agreed that he was conscientious and tender in his pastoral duties; he was wonderfully sweet to Mrs. Fenton, they said, a cranky old lady whom Billy and I used to mimic, sitting on her veranda all day in a rocking chair, moaning. I had heard Billy's mother say that breathing the piny air in the arboretum was what made the Reverend, as she called him, so serene.

Yet I was afraid of him. The reason for this—beyond whatever it was in his marathon sermons that set my nerves twanging—was the kind of boy his son, my friend Billy, was turning out to be. Pale, thin, washed-out, obedient, with eyes as sad as those of a bloodhound, Billy wore shorts that hung down below his knees, and scuffed black shoes with no socks. He made a hopeless Royal Marine.

He was a wonderful pal to have, though, because he would do anything I asked him to. But I pitied him, too, and blamed his flaccid condition entirely on his father. If Dr. Wyman could spend so much on a swarm of coolies to tend his conifers, why couldn't he buy Billy some decent clothes, instead of making him wear his older brothers' worn-out hand-me-downs? Couldn't he expend some of his renowned gentleness on his forlorn son? What I saw flicker in Billy's eyes whenever we came roistering into that cluttered house and found Dr. Wyman looming there over some foul-smelling chemicals in an experiment he was touchily conducting—the pain I glimpsed in Billy's eyes at such a moment—told me that he was mortally afraid of that big, kind man.

One day I had a thrilling idea: Billy and I would camp out overnight in the pup tent. I asked my mother if we could. "You'll have to ask your father," she said.

I waited until after he had won a tennis match, six-one six-love, and then I did.

"Do you have your mother's permission?" he asked me.

"I haven't had a chance to check with her," I said.

"Come back when you have her permission," he said.

This was a game of shuttle diplomacy at which I had become adept, and before long I had my go-ahead. I announced the plan to Billy. He shook his head back and forth only about a quarter of an inch each way—an economical gesture that expressed an enormous negative. He would never get permission from his father. I suggested that, to begin with, we go to work on his mother.

Mrs. Wyman seemed at first glance to be one of those deeply wounded but resigned ladies—of whom there were so very many among missionary wives—who wore shapeless dresses and were always having to push back, with a sigh, stubborn stray tresses of their prematurely gray hair and refasten them any which way with one of a shoal of tortoise-shell hairpins. She had no territory of her own in the home. Dr. Wyman had considerably set aside a small oak desk on which she might keep his accounts, but he had ruined its surface by spilling some acid during one of his explorations of God's marvelous secrets. Yet with my shrewd small-boy's eyes I had often observed the way she could balance the huge minister on the little finger of her left hand while her right hand was doing something that would have astonished if not outraged him, had he but noticed. She had Scottish blood and a residue of lake-country canniness in her makeup.

The long and the short of it was that we got permission from Wyman *mère* and later, with *mère's* help but not without growls, from *père*. Protocols drawn up by Dr. Wyman required that the tent be pitched no more than twenty feet from the sleeping porch of our house, so that, if necessary, a yell would waken my parents. We were not to stir from inside the tent after sunset and before dawn. We could not sleep in our clothes but would have to wear pajamas. No foodstuffs, no matches, no loud talk.

It was dark in the tent, and we obeyed all the rules the first night.

FOR A WHILE, THE WARLORDS HAVING PACKED THEMSELVES off, Billy and I had to try to keep up with the energies of our older brothers. We galloped to East Cliff on donkeyback, left far behind by the big boys, in a paper chase—a simulated fox hunt, introduced at Peitaiho by British missionaries, in which the hunters followed a trail of torn-up bits of back issues of *The Peking and Tientsin Times*, which had been scattered earlier for miles across the country by an adult “master of hounds.” We fished for snuffers from Tiger Rocks, off the American beach, and under the pressure of dares from the bigger boys we dived in error into mysterious boulder-rimmed depths off the high “forehead rock.” They made us serve as ball boys for their tennis tournament, and allowed us to shag foul balls when they played baseball against the 15th Infantry team, which always beat the missionary kids by scores like 33–2, in five innings.

On some days our brothers refused to let “the brats” tag along, and we went howling to our mothers. A few of those days turned out to be the sweetest of the summer. Once, asking pity on us, Mrs. Wyman sent her Number One Boy down to the village to find an itinerant rice-paste sculptor, who came up the hill carrying the two cylindrical cases of his “studio” on a shoulder pole; in twenty minutes, for two coppers, mixing and tinting and molding the Plasticene-like paste, he made for Billy and me a pair, each eight inches tall, of magnificently ferocious warriors of the era of the Three Kingdoms. The next time was my mother’s turn, and she sent our Wang down to find a magician, who, also with his gear in two containers on a shoulder pole, dazzled us on our front veranda, pulling silk cloths out of his ar and asking Billy and me to try to guess which shifting iceware cup the jade grasshopper was under, and even finding a live dove in my mother’s hat, the one with red wax cherries on it, which she had left lying on the glider hat day. Once we were entertained by child acrobats. Once we were allowed to make ice cream in midafternoon in the hand-turned freezer, with rock-salted ice, both of us cking the mixing blade at the same time.

The greatest treat of all for me—we had learned to re-double our howls when the big boys left us behind—was the day Dr. Wyman took us for a walk in the arboretum. My fear of him vanished, and I was glad to have him keep hold of my hand along the cavernous, deep-shaded paths. Birds were in ecstasy among the slivers of light overhead. The needle scent acted on me like opium, and I felt that I was floating, to the music of the Latin names of species that Dr. Wyman softly recited in a kind of dream I had never even hoped to have.

A few days later news came that troops of Chang Tso-lin had shown up again near Shanhaikwan only a few miles from us, where the Great Wall came down to the sea. The big boys were called up for guard duty, and Billy and I heedled and whined until we were given permission to leap out in the tent another time.

It was a full-moon night. The cloth of the tent glowed. I could not sleep. I don’t know what time it was when some-

thing perverse surged up in me and I whispered, “Billy?”

He, too, was wide awake. “What?”

“Let’s go down to the arboretum.”

“Now?”

“Sure. It’s a wizard night.”

“It’s against the rules,” Billy said.

“Pshaw, Billy”—the closest I could come to swearing at that time—“don’t be a spoilsport.”

“I don’t think Daddy would like it.”

But Billy would do anything I asked him to, and soon we were two bright ghosts in our white PJs, slinking downhill along the three-foot-high border wall of my family’s lot, both of us in a crouch, as if that would hide us from the searching light of the moon. The gate to the arboretum was locked. I had to help Billy up onto the wall and then, my heart beating wildly, I jumped up after him. We sat there on the curved plaster top quite a while, not daring to hurry down the other side. Finally I scrambled down. Billy still hesitated. I tugged at him, until finally his need for compliance overcame his fear, and he slithered down.

When our eyes had adjusted to the shadows, we started along the central path. I held Billy’s hand. I had goose pimples all up and down my back and arms and legs. We did not speak.

Somewhere far away—not in the grove, I am now convinced—an owl suddenly hooted, and Billy and I turned and ran. He got over the wall this time without any help.

A BRITISH SUBMARINE CRUISED LIKE A SHARK ON THE surface of the silver gulf and anchored in our bay, close enough to shore that boys even as small as Billy and I could swim out—nervous all the way—to look it over. Its presence lent a new naval arm to our daytime military operations in and around the pup tent. Since nothing naughty or dangerous appeared to have happened, our sleeping out in the tent on fair-weather nights had now come to be accepted by both mothers—and therefore had been sanctioned with doubtful glowers by the supposed final authorities, the fathers. The next three times after our adventure in the arboretum, we pitched the tent at sundown, crawled in, and more or less scrupulously followed the rules. But as I lay awake on the hard ground on those nights, something kept gnawing at me, filling me with delight and fear.

Finally, one afternoon, on the most delicious day of the summer, with a sky like the inside of a beautiful seedless Concord grape and air so calm that time seemed to have stopped, I waited until we were in a good mood after having routed Chang Tso-lin for the hundredth time, and then I said to Billy, “Tell you what, let’s do something big.”

“Oh, no,” Billy said, the blood fleeing from his cheeks. “What now?”

I grabbed him by the shirt and whispered, “Tonight,

after everyone's asleep, we'll strike the tent and take it down to the arboretum and pitch it in, you know, that open clearing. And sleep there. Wouldn't that be neat?"

Billy looked as if I had stabbed him. I kept whispering. I told him I'd take my new little alarm clock with us; we could get up at five and bring the tent back up, and no one would ever know. It would be easy. Sleeping so near the house had gotten boring.

"It's so dark down there," Billy said.

"I've thought about that," I said. "Listen, Billy, you know that coal miner's hat of your father's, the one with the little kerosene lamp fastened to it over the visor? I've noticed it's in that jumbled heap of stuff in the corner of your what-do-you-call-it, spare room?—where he just throws junk—you know? that he's never going to use again? That he's completely forgotten about? We could borrow that."

I was pushing Billy into the very pith of danger, and I knew it. And I know now that this awareness was the knife edge of my excitement. Another thing I knew then was that Billy would in time come round to doing what I asked. It took a lot of whispering, but Billy came round.

It was about eleven o'clock, and the lights had long been out in both our houses, when we surreptitiously pulled up the tent pegs and collapsed the poles and folded the canvas. I had sneaked a tin of wick oil out to the tent and had filled the miner's lamp, and I had a box of wooden matches in the pocket of my shorts. (A couple of tent-nights ago we had given up changing into pajamas, though each time we would bundle them up and use them as pillows, so that our mothers could see the next day that they were wrinkled and soiled.) Of course we would wait until later to light the lamp, but I put the hat on Billy's head. There was a dim glow from a half moon high in the sky. I looked up at it and shivered. It had a strange misty ring

around it. It was like an eye in the sky, looking right at us. It knew everything. It must have been able to make out, as I could in its cold glare, that the miner's hat was too big for Billy's head but that it somehow stayed in place. He was going to be the one to wear it.

When we got the tent over the wall and had gone over ourselves, I lit the lamp. It created a magical sphere of soft visibility, into the fuzzy outer membrane of which, as we stole toward the glade, all the varieties of evergreen reached their feathery hands to greet us. I felt blissful, and even Billy was moved; he said, in a trembling voice, "Say this is keen." We pitched the tent with no trouble, crept in, snuffed the lamp, and bedded down on the fragrant carpet. We whispered awhile, but soon I drifted off into the deepest sleep I'd ever had on this earth.

I was having a frightful dream. The entire tent was snatched away from over us in a sudden swoop, like a single beat of the wings of a huge condor, and I heard a deep roaring, as of some great natural cataclysm. But, no, no, wasn't dreaming, I was all too awake. I sat up, my buttock aprickle, and I sensed that Billy was sitting up beside me whimpering. Dr. Wyman stood over us, glowing in the moonlight in his pajamas. The words of his rage broke on me like rough waves roiling me in the sand. With a grip on the ridge pole, he held the whole tent high in his right hand. "Up! Up!" he shouted. "Pick up your things," he roared. As we scrambled about, he saw the miner's hat. "You brought a flame into my arboretum," he said in kind of groan. "You lit matches under these trees." Then he leaned his huge face down toward me and shouted twice, "You little devil! You little devil!"

In my bed on our sleeping porch, much, much later, could still hear, all the way from the Wymans' house, Bill crying out till I thought his lungs must burst.

The next afternoon I could only imagine that Mrs. Wy-

LETTERS TO THE WINNER

After the war, and just after marriage and fatherhood ended in divorce, our neighbor won the special lottery, an amount then equal to fifteen years of a manager's salary at the bank, or fifty years' earnings by a marginal farmer fermenting his clothes in the black marinade of sweat, up in his mill-logging paddocks.

The district, used to one mailbag, now received two every mail day. The fat one was for our neighbor. After a dip or two, he let these bags accumulate around the plank walls of the kitchen, over the chairs, till on a rainy day, he fed the tail-switching calves, let the bullocks out of the yard, and, pausing at the door to wash his hands, came inside to read the letters.

Shaken out in a vast mound on the kitchen table they slid down, slithered to his fingers. *I have 7 children I am under the doctor if you could see your way clear equal Pardners in the Venture God would bless you lovey assured of our best service for a mere fifteen pounds down remember you're only lucky I knew you from the paper straightaway*

Baksheesh, hissed the pages as he flattened them, baksheesh: *mate if your interested in a fellow diggers problems old mate a friend in need—the Great Golden Letter having come, now he was being punished for it. You sound like a lovely big boy we could have such times her's my photoe Doll Im wearing my birthday swimsuit with the right man I would share this infallible system.*

nan felt her youngest duckling had been too severely punished in the night, and that she had begged the Reverend in the morning for Christian forgiveness. Because, to my astonishment, Billy was allowed to come over to play with me. The rims of his eyes were purple. I was sincere in my apologies to him and promised I would never get him in trouble again, and he, with his gentle, fragile nature, forgave me. But our play around the tent, which we repitched in its "safe" place twenty feet from our sleeping porch, was half-hearted. I didn't feel like singing out commands to Billy with my usual bravura. The day was sticky, and depressing. Despite a lack of wind on our cheeks, swift clouds scudded in from the sea, low overhead. We perpired. Chang Tso-lin languished in the enemy camp. I kept thinking that although Dr. Wyman had leaned down and spoken those last few words to me in sermon tones the night before, he must surely have meant the word *devil* only in a slangy sort of way, to be written in my heavenly record with a lower-case initial. Not the real thing. I nipped my arm and could not smell burning sulfur. Billy was sympathetic. He saw how bad I felt, and to cheer me up he kept making suggestions: we could send a scouting party around the other side of the house, we could radio the sub to search toward Lighthouse Point . . .

Later I was in the tent. "Hey," Billy said, "come out here."

I knew the various timbres of his voice, and I heard a ring in this summons that made me scramble out pell-mell on my hands and knees.

"Look," he said, pointing out to the gulf.

Above the horizon, along its whole span, rolled a cloud as black as charcoal, with a sickish viridian light between it and the sea, and then I saw what had alarmed Billy, as if the endless cloud itself weren't bad enough. On a bearing straight out from the submarine there hung down from the

black cloud a slender conical tendril, equally black, which seemed at first to weave slightly back and forth. Then it grew longer, like a finger poking down, down. Next, in horror, as if we, too young, were watching a primal scene of unspeakable obscenity, sea mating with sky, we saw a cone rise up from the water and move in a wavering way toward the shore, dancing in response to the finger above, separate from it but following directly beneath it. With a sudden spurt, vapor and water flew together, and the sky began to suck up the sea.

Now we realized that the sinuous spout was coming close to the shore. Miraculously, it took a detour around the submarine, which lay calmly at anchor at the rim of the vortex of violent whitecaps surrounding the column. I heard my mother screaming my name. The twister reached land, half a mile from us, and Billy and I saw a cottage seem to explode. Its roof—all the foreigners' cottages at Peitaiho had corrugated tin roofs—was ripped off in pieces, and huge sheets of metal and scraps of wood and branches of trees and a million fragments of everything rose and revolved and fell, until another house was hit, and after that . . . but Billy and I turned away and ran for it. My mother hugged me, and my father shouted, "You boys hold the sleeping-porch door shut." We two, glad to have work to do, ran to that door, which, though it was latched, was already trembling. We braced ourselves against it. I was thinking how glad I was not to be able to see what was happening outside, when with a splitting sound the jamb gave way and the door flew open, throwing Billy and me to the floor halfway across the room. On hands and knees in the indoor gale I looked up and saw the roof of the McAlisters' house, beyond and to the left of the Wymans', lifted off whole, almost exactly as the pup tent had been ripped from above us the night before, and I heard a roar that sounded to me just like Dr. Wyman's rage. The typhoon

When he lifted the stove's iron disc and started feeding in
the pages he'd read, they clutched and streamed up
the corrugated

black chimney shaft. And yet he went on reading,
holding each page by its points, feeling an obligation
to read each crude rehearsed lie, each come-on,
flat truth, extremity:

He might visit you the wise investor a loan a bush man like you

Remember we met on Roma Street for your delight and mine

Lick of the sultana—the white moraine kept slipping
his messages to him *you will be accursed* he husked them
like cobs

For Nouveau Jack old man my legs are all paralysed up.

Black smuts swirled weightless in the room *some good*
kind person

Like the nausea of a novice free-falling in a deep mine's cage
now I have lost his pension and formed a sticky nimbus round him

but he read on, fascinated by a further human range
not even war had taught him, nor literature glossed for him
since he never read literature. Merely the great reject pile
which high style is there to snub and filter, for readers.
That his one day's reading had a strong taste of what
he and war
had made of his marriage is likely; he was not
without sympathy,

but his leap had hit a wire through which the human
is policed.

His head throbbed as if busting with a soundless shout
of immemorial sobbed invective *God-forsaken, God-forsaken*
as he stopped reading, and sat blackened in his riches.

—Les A. Murray

was calling me names. I closed my eyes. I heard a terrible crash but felt no pain. Then the ministerial roar seemed to move on toward other devils in other houses. The wind suddenly died. Torrents of water came down as the sky's buckets of salt sea fell back on us. Our house had held.

An hour after the wind subsided, but while it was still pouring, my oldest brother, Peter, the most adventurous of the three of us boys, rushed out of the house to scout the wreckage on our Rocky Point hill. My mother called to him to come back, but he ran on. He had not gone far when he noticed a knot of people in the Wymans' lot, and he ran to them and saw that they were standing in a soaked circle around Dr. Wyman's dead body. Of course Peter rushed back to tell us about it. He used to boast about the accuracy of his observations, and he described the cadaver to us in gruesome detail. A huge sheet of metal from the McAlisters' roof, skimming along over the ground "at a hundred miles an hour," Peter said, had cut Dr. Wyman in two at the waist and then had flipped away, leaving the two halves of the pastor prone in what still seemed to be something like a running position. The driving rain had washed away all the blood.

"And, oh, by the way," Peter said, "every single tree in the arboretum was uprooted. You should see the mess—trunks in all directions. It's a rat's nest."

Hearing these things, I experienced a surge of the greatest joy I had ever known. The Grandfather in heaven was, after all, capable of love, and He loved me. He had brought this typhoon for me. The roar of the storm's rage had not been meant for me at all; it had been aimed at Billy's father. This God whom I welcomed at last was both merciful and angry, for he had forgiven me my trespasses and punished Dr. Wyman for his. I was sorry, deeply sorry, about the arboretum, but it seemed to me that in destroying it, God may have been pointing a finger at one of Dr. Wyman's sins of pride. From my Sunday School lore I conjured up a dim sense that Dr. Wyman had tried to create—with only his coolies' help, not God's—a Garden of Eden of his own, which he had wanted to keep forever for Adam's own selfish use.

My joy, my conversion, my perfect faith, lasted only a day. The next morning, though the downpour was by no means over, my other brother, Amos, went across to the Wymans' house, and when he came back, he told me he'd heard Mrs. Wyman say that the reason the Reverend had been out there in the fury of the storm was that he had gone to look for Billy, to rescue him from danger. That changed everything. I began to have nightmares every night.

We had three solid days of torrential rain. Miraculously, our house had suffered only minor damage. A six-foot-

square piece of roofing had struck our porch roof—the crash I had heard. The skirts of the twister must have swerved just enough to miss us; the McAlisters' house in one direction and two on the other side of us were hit hard. Dr. Wyman's little storm-proof box had taken the full force of the wind, with no damage but some broken windows. A few days later Amos found the canvas of the pup tent undamaged in a sorghum field a quarter of a mile from the house. The ridge pole was still in it but was broken; we never found the uprights.

I didn't see Billy for a fortnight. Because of the bad dreams I was having, my mother thought I should probably not go to the funeral. (After it, I overheard her scolding Peter for having told us all a fib the day of the storm she had learned that Dr. Wyman had not been cut in two at all, though he had indeed been mortally wounded at the midriff.) The weather turned lovely. Our Number One Boy, Wang, was a clever carpenter, and he liked me; he made new poles and pegs for the tent, and I finally set it up in the "safe" place, but I had no fun playing around it alone.

The very next day Billy came over. I hardly recognized him. He had on brand-new white shorts, I could see his nubby knees, and he was wearing Keds. His hair was brushed. When we started our war game, he had some rather impertinent suggestions—they proved to be good ones, I had to admit—about maneuvers against Chang Tso-lin.

Before he left for home, he said, "Let's sleep in the arboretum tonight."

I was astonished at his taking that kind of initiative. "Gee, Billy," I said, "it's a ruin."

"I know," he said. "It belongs to me now. My brother aren't interested. Mama said I could replant it."

"Replant it? What are you going to use for seeds?"

"Daddy has—I mean he had—masses of seeds. And I've already sent for some seedlings from Szechuan. One of the China Inland Missions advertises them in *The Recorder*, you know—jolly good cedars just like those in the Holy Land."

I slept poorly that night in what had been the clearing in the arboretum. Billy snored. In the morning he boiled water on a Sterno rack that he had brought in his knapsack and made tea for us. Dr. Wyman's squad of coolies showed up with two-man saws. Billy had the key to the gate and let them in, and he told them where to start cutting up the trunks. He said he was going to try to right some of the very young trees, which still seemed to have life in them and he asked me to help him with one of the smaller ones. He grabbed hold of the trunk with me and began straining and I saw that his teeth were clenched and his pathetic jaw muscles and neck muscles were all tightened up. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

ISAK DINESEN AND MARILYN MONROE

ON THE FIFTH OF FEBRUARY, 1959, Carson McCullers gave a luncheon. She seldom entertained anymore, her health was so precarious, but Isak Dinesen was in town—New York, that is—for the first (and only) time, and there were two women she wanted to meet. McCullers was one. The other was Marilyn Monroe.

Dinesen mentioned this to McCullers when they were introduced at a literary function, and Carson said nothing could be easier. She knew Marilyn, she said, and there was Arthur Miller at the next table; she would ask a few old friends as well. It was a little disconcerting to learn that “Tanya,” as Dinesen preferred being called, lived on oysters and white grapes, washed down with champagne—so perhaps a soufflé, too, she told her cook, in case the other guests found that fare meager.

On the day, the Millers called for Dinesen in their car, late—when was it otherwise with Marilyn? But Monroe did look luscious in her black sheath with the pronounced décolletage and fur collar. Tanya, who weighed eighty-

odd pounds, wore an elegant gray suit, her head swathed in a turban. After lunch she told one of her tales—about being young in Kenya and killing her first lion and sending the skin to the King of Denmark. It was a hard act to follow. But Marilyn had a story too, if a less heroic one: she was giving a dinner party, using her mother-in-law’s recipe for noodles, but it got late, the guests arrived, and she had to finish off the noodles with a hairdryer. Marilyn was always best in comic parts. Then Carson, as she told it later, put a record on the phonograph and she, Tanya, and Marilyn danced together—on top of the black marble dining table, she said.

Blame it on the oysters and champagne. Illusion prevailed that day: Karen Blixen and Norma Jean Baker were submerged in the myths of Dinesen and Monroe. Marilyn had not disappointed Dinesen, who compared her to a lion cub, all unbounded vitality and innocence. There was a natural sympathy between them; Carson, watching them, even called it love.

—Nancy Caldwell Sorel

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TRAVEL

BUYING THE SCENE

Where to eat and sleep if you're in an L.A. state of mind

BY CORBY KUMMER

[RECENTLY TRAVELED to Los Angeles to report on restaurants and hotels, arriving with me high expectations of finding the most stimulating food to be had in America and lofty international standards of lodging and service. I quickly discovered that I had an attitude problem. Although I could judge the hotels against any standards I chose, to appreciate Los Angeles restaurants I had to stop scrutinizing the food for every regional and ethnic influence, in a sober and journalistically responsible attempt to get a firm grip on "California cuisine," and admit what a good time I was having just sitting in them.

My problem came clear one night at a restaurant where flashbulbs went off every few minutes and life-style-show video crews circulated. The friend who had bought me a table leaned over our metal table and asked, "Are you comfortable here?" I looked around the brightly lit room, filled with people who were no doubt responsible for the news in that morning's *daily Variety*.

"Well," I began, "we've just discussed how the blackberry sauce under the quail, which is raw, probably doesn't have any blackberries in it, and how the trisnip pancakes are really only potato; I'm glad that the conversation next to us is so interesting, because I'd hear it just as clearly if it weren't; and you've had to stand over every third sentence to ask me what I was saying." She leaned back in her metal-grille chair and smiled beneficently. "That's why I love this place," she said. "It's so *comfortable*."

The friend is someone who knows good food, and has had it where we were sitting. This was a place she loved to go, twice or not. For all the trumpeted innovation of California cuisine—which in fact has settled down considerably—the scene at a restaurant still counts more than the food. "I don't care what's on the plates, honey—show me what's on the chairs," another friend recently summed up for me. Although there is delicious and unusual food to be had everywhere

in Los Angeles, it's not necessarily what keeps people coming to restaurants. Far fewer roving gastronomes than I had expected to see were reading food trends into every new kind of seaweed or pepper. All but the most diehard among them were excited by what was on the chairs.

Although design is often as important to the success of a restaurant as the food, you don't have to help amortize upholstery. (You do have to pay for location; fashionable restaurants are less expensive than their East Coast counterparts, but still easily cost \$40 a person at dinner.) It's very rare to find padded seats or even tablecloths in crowded Los Angeles restaurants, which as a rule have concrete walls and hard wooden seats, or, better yet, metal ones—anything that looks as though it could be outdoors. Many restaurants even have umbrellas over indoor tables, and most are brightly lit, so that you can get a good look at

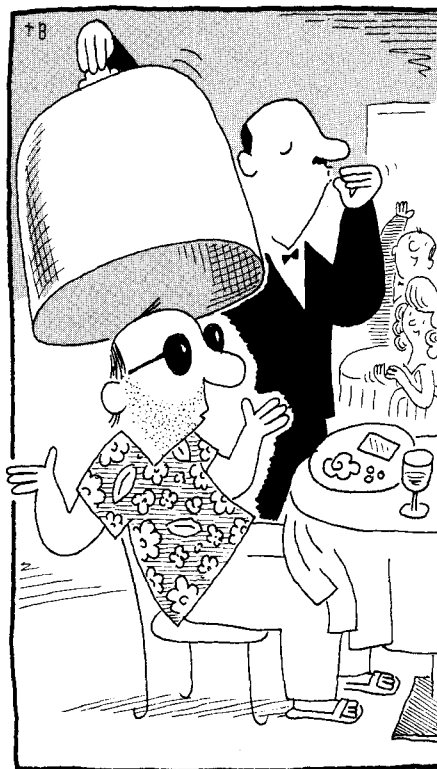
everyone in the place. It seems that designers are most comfortable reminding diners of two prototypical California environments—patios and parking lots.

I CHOSE THE RESTAURANTS I ate at to see and taste the latest, and also to have some good food. I didn't go to any of the city's undiluted ethnic restaurants, but Asian and Mexican restaurants are plentiful, reflecting the immigrant populations, and they offer higher quality and lower prices than their counterparts almost anywhere else in the country.

The restaurant of the moment is Citrus, and it is so popular that it has built a roof over its large patio and made the hundred formerly outdoor seats permanent, without, of course, changing the furniture. Michel Richard, the chef of Citrus, was trained as a pastry chef, and he has the great pastry chef's love of architecture. He has taken inspiration from the postmodern fantasies all along the fashionable strip of Melrose Avenue, where his restaurant is situated (at the corner of Citrus Street, the source of its perfect California name). The design of his plates of exotic fishes and classic sauces could be incorporated nicely into the logos of many of the shops down the street.

Much of the food is very good, too—especially a grilled tuna burger on rounds of buttered and griddle-browned brioche with mayo and mâche. The desserts show what a classically trained pastry chef can do after he's been in California for a while (make puff-pastry discs out of sheets of phyllo dough, caramelize the surfaces, sandwich a rich custard reminiscent of *crème brûlée* between them, and serve it on a thin caramel sauce—something I nominate for dessert of the year). But eating takes a distant second to watching what's on the chairs, in this case movie and television executives and stars. It's much more exciting to try to get a table at Citrus than to decide what to order.

The same has been true nightly at Spago, the Hollywood restaurant, since Wolfgang Puck opened it, seven years ago. Its popularity at first had a great deal to do with Puck's expertise as a chef. Puck was one of those who made famous the ever-elusive California cuisine, a working definition of which might be light food incorporating influences from several regional and ethnic cuisines and emphasizing the freshness



ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BLOOM

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of its raw materials. Now that Puck is less often at the stoves, the food goes from very good to medium and the famous pizzas have been surpassed by those at other restaurants in the city. The restaurant's continued success owes more to Puck's personality, which lives up to his name—he gives the dining rooms every evening the air of a party to which both you and he are very fortunate to have been invited. You're not likely to receive an invitation, however: waits for tables are often longer than the time spent at them, and there is always someone in a holding pattern at the bar, wishing you'd pay your check.

Spago is not the first restaurant I would go to if I needed to eat right away or have an intimate conversation, but it's probably the first restaurant I'd go to after a period away from Los Angeles—I'd feel caught up by the time I was seated. If you want the food without the scene and you don't mind a forty-five-minute drive from West Hollywood, you might try the highly regarded Parkway Grill, in Pasadena, started by several Spago graduates.

Many of the other places famous for California cuisine are near-private clubs for movie executives and actors (Morton's and The Ivy, in West Hollywood, and 72 Market Street and the West Beach Cafe, in the beach community of Venice). One where the food can be as impressive as the crowd is Trumps, a spare and severely elegant restaurant in West Hollywood which is tense with executives closing deals; Michael Roberts, its French-trained chef, presents unusual combinations (a brie and grape quesadilla with sweet-pea guacamole, for example) to steady acclaim, and serves an afternoon tea that has caught on with both shoppers and executives. Another is Michael's, in Santa Monica, the training ground for several California-cuisine chefs who have become famous on their own. The spirit of the menus at Michael's hasn't changed much from nine years ago, when California cuisine was first gaining attention and young American chefs who had apprenticed in France were applying their training to newly available American game and vegetables. Michael McCarty, the owner, maintains high standards (and prices), so the food is good. The most pleasant and affordable time to go is at brunch on the weekend. It would be a shame to miss the blueberry pancakes.

The French influence is also clear at City Restaurant, near West Hollywood,

whose strenuously modern menu includes Thai, Indian, and Cajun dishes. City Restaurant epitomizes and almost sends up Los Angeles restaurant trends: the patio furniture and gray cement walls make it very noisy, and even far tables are within view of the standard-issue open kitchen, by way of video monitors.

Design upstages food at another of this season's very hot restaurants—Rebecca's, in Venice, designed by Frank Gehry, with various polystyrene and cut-glass animals descending from the ceiling. Any food would seem secondary to the clamor of the decor and the diners; but the Mexican food there is said to be quite good. So is the Mexican food at the Border Grill, in West Hollywood, owned by Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger, who own City Restaurant.

The ethnic purity of the menus of Rebecca's and the Border Grill surprised me, after I'd seen so much French technique applied to the cuisines of other countries. Wasn't there French-Southwest? The answer is yes, and the meal I had at Saint Estèphe, a restaurant in a shopping center in Manhattan Beach, a half hour's drive from West Hollywood, was the most memorable of my trip. John Sedlar, who trained with famous French chefs, presents the dishes of his native New Mexico with French techniques and arrangements so elaborate that each plate would show to advantage on a poster. Two typical Sedlar menu descriptions are "Kachina mosaic of American caviars with chopped egg and endive feathers" and "grilled squab with wild rice, pinto-bean sauce, and saffron arrows." They might sound highly objectionable to anyone who prefers eating to looking, but all the dishes are anchored in two real cuisines that Sedlar has mastered, and the pairing makes each more interesting. Perhaps most surprising, nearly all of the exquisitely presented food tastes good.

Straight-ahead French is by no means outmoded. I gave in to a tight schedule and my inclination for Italian food, and did not visit the two leaders, L'Ermitage and L'Orangerie, which vie in repute for classic French food served in opulent surroundings (the chairs are padded). Many people are devoted to Le Chardonnay, modeled on a belle-époque brasserie, which attracts the sort of serious diners who like to touch base with Quality once a month, and La Toque, smaller still, the domain of the erratic and often brilliant Ken Frank, who

serves French nouvelle with a Japanese influence.

Pastas and pizzas took up columns of Los Angeles menus before they did on menus almost anywhere else in the country, but the number of Italian restaurants run by purists is small. The two big deals are Valentino, in Santa Monica which serves minimally California-ized Italian dishes—the owner, Piero Selvaggio, will put cornmeal in crepe batter, for example, which isn't done in Italy, and serve the crepes filled with corn and ancho chilies—and is justly famous for its risotto; and Rex, a big and sumptuous restaurant in downtown Los Angeles whose decor incorporates the art-deco appointments of the haberdashery that once occupied the same space. Both Selvaggio and Mauro Vincenti, the owner of Rex, are concerned with grand dining and serve delicious and expensive food. Primi, another very successful restaurant of Selvaggio's, in Century City, offers only first courses and is less formal than Valentino.

Evan Kleiman, the co-author of the excellent *Cucina Fresca*, is concerned with rustic Italian dishes that breathe the earth and the vegetable patches of the Italian countryside. Her Ange Caffè, on Melrose Avenue, is so good and reasonably priced that many regulars go there four times a week; Kleiman has found a Neapolitan pizza maker whose pizza and calzone are the best in Los Angeles. She recently opened Trattoria Angeli in the high-rent neighborhood of Brentwood, where she hopes to have more freedom by offering a more expensive menu, in more comfortable surroundings. The surroundings at Angeli Caffè are as stark and noisy, and the crowds as influential and studiously underdressed, as any in Los Angeles, but after one look at the menu I knew I was home.

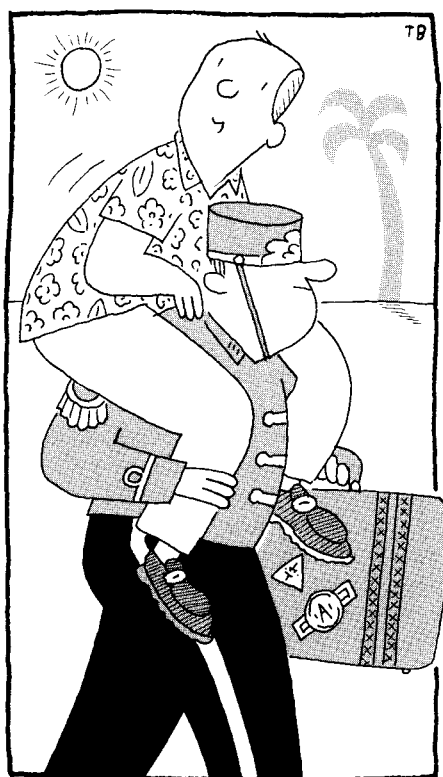
LOS ANGELES HOTELS don't always give so strong a sense of where you are. The Chateau Marmont, nestled among the giant billboards of Sunset Strip, used to be the hotel equivalent of a Melrose Avenue California-cuisine restaurant. Now it is seedy and depressing. Writers and trendsetters of the bohemian life have decamped to the Shangri-La, a streamlined, whitewashed ocean liner of a hotel fronting the Santa Monica beach, west of Beverly Hills and a bit south of Malibu. Five years ago the rooms, all of which have cross-ventilation from windows facing out and with

ows on open-air hallways, were redeco-
ated in the style of the era in which the
otel was built—glass mirrors etched
with late-1930s flowers, old movie post-
ers, a lot of mauve. They recall the time
when expatriate New York writers
layed at the Garden of Allah residential
otel and counted the hours until they
could get out of town. The prices at the
hangri-La are lower than they are at
most Los Angeles hotels, starting at \$85
for a single and \$110 for a suite). There
is no restaurant, though—just a break-
fast and tea room with *Ozzie and Harriet*
covered wallpaper and toasters on the
tables.

Another quintessential Los Angeles
hotel was referred to as a Shangri-La be-
fore the Santa Monica hotel was renovat-
ed. The Bel-Air is set on eleven and a
half hilly and rigorously landscaped
acres in Bel-Air, the section near Beverly
Hills where the mansions, in every sort
of period and national style, are so shiny
and perfect that they look like they be-
long in Disneyland. These houses are
as carefully measured as any in
Tokyo, in the epicenter of “tear-down”
territory (see the cover story in this is-
sue), and so the acreage indicates the ex-
traordinary luxury of a hotel situated in
the most desirable area of Beverly Hills
which could be compared to any cele-
brated European country inn.

The rooms at the Bel-Air are in low
link-stucco buildings with bay windows
and Mission details. Flowering vines
overhang the paths between buildings
and to the pool, the largest I saw. Al-
though the landscaping, the eccentric
layout of the buildings, and the separa-
tion of room entrances suggest complete
privacy, you can sometimes hear your
neighbors. Also, the rooms vary greatly
in size, and you should say so if you want
large or a secluded one (I had a prized
room, number 164, whose patio opens
into the kitchen’s herb garden). Many
have working fireplaces, and you should
look for one of those, too. You might not
have luck: a very well heeled couple
chatting with the concierge was leafing
through one of the frequent adulatory
articles about the hotel and said, point-
ing to one picture, “Let’s try for that
room the next time we come.” The con-
cierge looked downward. “I’m afraid
that was just taken for the year.” So,
turned out, was the next room the
guests liked.

Given an average price of \$250 a day,
the rooms attract the sort of clientele
you’d expect. I had just missed Henry



Kissinger and his bodyguards, and var-
ious other celebrities I can’t remember.
Every bit of this paradise—which really
is all it’s cracked up to be—comes at a
price. A Continental breakfast for one
can easily run \$17, and a medium bottle
of Evian from the “honor bar” is billed at
\$9.50. It might be hard to justify the
Bel-Air to your company’s accounting
department, but it does seem appropri-
ate for a honeymoon.

Both the Beverly Hills Hotel and the
Beverly Wilshire, strongly identified
with Los Angeles, are undergoing great
changes, precipitated by new owners.
The Beverly Hills, which I’ll come back
to, is being renovated. The original
wing of the Beverly Wilshire, at Wilshire
and Rodeo (perhaps the best address in
Beverly Hills, for its proximity to the
shopping on both streets), has been gut-
ted and will re-open in May under the
management of the Regent hotel chain,
which is famous for the service at its
hotels in Asia. A new luxury hotel
owned by the Sofitel group will open
near Beverly Hills this spring. The stan-
dard that they will all have to match has
been set by the Four Seasons Hotel,
which opened last April in a high-rise
building on the edge of Beverly Hills
and West Hollywood, with views of most
of Los Angeles.

I will admit that I am not impartial
about the Four Seasons chain. It offers
all the services that a modern traveler

wants—something that few European
hotels do—and unlike the best Europe-
an hotels, it doesn’t seem overly im-
pressed with itself. Four Seasons hotels
offer good value. At the moment, while
it establishes itself in the market, the
Los Angeles Four Seasons is undersell-
ing its competitors (singles start at \$175,
doubles at \$200).

The rooms are the most attractive and
best-equipped I saw besides those at the
Bel-Air (televisions and unclamped hair
dryers in the bathroom, plentiful lamps,
telephones on the desk and by the bed
with two lines and jacks for modems)
and the service was the best I had any-
where. The concierges are there when
you need them and know what they’re
doing; room service tells you how long
the wait will be when you order and
shows up when it promises, with the or-
der straight; the laundry comes back on
time. The hotel has a large pool and an
exercise room, and the room-service and
restaurant menus offer “alternative” cui-
sine, low in fat, sodium, cholesterol, and
sugar. (Isadore Sharp, the founder of the
chain, is a fitness nut.) The public
rooms are decorated in a plush and
muted California style that looks as if it
originated on the covers of *Architectural
Digest*—oversize chairs and sofas in
light colors, rococo and baroque details
here and there, lush materials, big ar-
rangements of fresh flowers everywhere.
The firm that designed the public rooms
is taking over Beverly Hills: it designed
some of the rooms at the Bel-Air and all
of them at the Century Towers (in the
adjacent Century City), and is gnawing
away at the refurbishment of the Bever-
ly Hills.

ALONG WITH THESE grand-luxe hotels
opening or being refurbished, a
small chain of hotels in West Hollywood
and Beverly Hills is aiming for the luxu-
ry market. Severyn Ashkenazy opened
L’Ermitage in a failed condominium
building in Beverly Hills twelve years
ago, and he has since built four other ho-
tels—Le Dufy, the Mondrian, Le Parc,
and the Bel Age. All have only suites,
not rooms, and are decorated in the
theme of an artist or a period. I stayed at
the Bel Age, a big hotel on Sunset Strip,
in West Hollywood, which is supposed
to recall an unspecified gracious era
around the turn of the century. Unfortu-
nately, it and the other hotels have an air
of cut-rate luxury. The building and
decorating materials look flimsy, and the
appliances look like they’re off-brands.

The vaunted service didn't work very well when I tried it at the Bel Age.

On a tour of the group I was drawn, however, to Le Parc. The decorating scheme (just greenery, not a variation of French provincial) seemed the least overbearing, the rooftop deck with its pool and trellised herb garden was spruce, and the staff seemed alert. Like the other hotels, Le Parc has free parking and is in a quiet and conveniently situated residential neighborhood (don't ask the residents of West Hollywood how they like living next door to a hotel—they tried to prevent Ashkenazy from building his current hotels and the two more he plans to open soon). The prices are so reasonable for the area—from \$110 to \$140 for a basic suite, which has only a curtained-off sleeping area—that even visitors not on business might well consider paying them.

Ashkenazy won't miss my business at L'Ermitage (which is unconnected to the restaurant of the same name) or most of his other hotels, for they are popular with people in the movie and music business, who stay for weeks at a time. He has shown how well attuned he is to the special needs of Los Angeles hotelgoers by making the annex of L'Ermitage, Le Petit Ermitage, into a small (fourteen rooms) hotel built for recovering plastic-surgery patients. It offers twenty-four-hour pharmaceutical and medical service, and free transportation to and from the hospital and the doctor's office—and, of course, "complete seclusion." The building is near a corner, but the sheer curtains are always drawn.

The Beverly Hills Hotel, a big pink-stucco complex of buildings that has stood for Los Angeles luxury since it opened, in 1912, is going through an identity crisis, and for now its place in the market is awaiting clarification. In December of 1986 the oil and entertainment tycoon Marvin Davis bought the hotel from the family of the wife of Ivan Boesky. Davis's attachment to the hotel ran deep, according to the public-relations woman who led me on a tour: not only did he spend his honeymoon there but his father died there. He quickly changed the management philosophy, and to the dismay of loyalists a young new management team that doesn't even recognize old faces, let alone pay obeisance to them, began courting travel agents and trying to turn a plutocracy into a comparative democracy. Davis was "personally overseeing" the refurbishment of the hotel, until he sold it,

last October, to the Sultan of Brunei.

What distinguishes the Beverly Hills Hotel are details like the banana-leaf wallpaper in the halls and the frilly wire stools at the boomerang-shaped lunch counter in the tiny Fountain Coffee Shop downstairs, which is said to have the best food in the hotel. But even if the 1950s have been in style at the retro stores on Melrose Avenue for almost ten years, they are not yet in style for expensive hotels. It is an open question whether the renovated Beverly Hills will look like itself or everyplace else. Certainly the rooms both upstairs and down look frayed, and some change is due.

The time when visitors did not officially exist until they had themselves paged by the pool is fading, although the rebuilt pool still has fifty-two phone connections and an active public-address system. Lounge chairs are three deep around the pool (which has been made shorter), giving the area the look of a very crowded beach. The twenty-two cabanas (each with telephone, of course) rent for \$75 a day, to hotel guests only. Anyone can take a meeting at the Polo Lounge for breakfast, a Hollywood ritual that continues with the desultory compunction of obligatory family visits. Power breakfasts have more cachet at the Bel-Air or at Hugo's, a coffee shop in West Hollywood that serves excellent coffee and tea. Beverly Hills is watching to see whether a dowdy grande dame can be rejuvenated. Maybe she should check in to Le Petit Ermitage.

BEVERLY HILLS AND West Hollywood aren't the only places to stay, of course, but they have the great majority of restaurants, fashionable shops, and night life, and downtown there are very few things to do at night or streets to walk that are considered safe. The very large Biltmore Hotel, downtown, was recently restored to its 1920s splendor, and the lobbies and bars, with their southwestern, art-deco, Tudor, and neo-classical ceilings and moldings, are worth visiting if you are in the neighborhood, on business or to see the celebrated new Museum of Contemporary Art. The public rooms are familiar from dozens of films, and show what Los Angeles looked like when it was feeling its way as a nationally important city. The guest rooms, unfortunately, were not enlarged, and they and the bathrooms seem small today. Nonetheless, the Biltmore is the place to stay if business will keep you downtown. The dark-blue-

tilled indoor pool has little to equal it other than the pool at Hearst Castle.

Developers have been quick to capitalize on the growth of business in the Newport Beach area, where several new hotels have recently opened. The Four Seasons there is even more opulent than the one in Los Angeles, with a large number of corner terraces (the floors are stepped), a big pool, and beautiful public rooms. It is incongruously set across from a shopping center, albeit the very expensive Fashion Island, several miles from the beach, and is down the freeway from South Coast Plaza, which may be the closest thing anywhere to Madison Avenue with a roof. The Meridien Hotel is even nearer to South Coast Plaza; its rooms are much smaller and plainer than those of the Four Seasons, but the restaurant, Antoine, draws people longingly for classic French food from West Los Angeles, at least a half-hour drive. Both hotels must contend with the Ritz at Laguna Niguel, a spectacular and extremely successful oceanfront hotel a forty-five-minute drive beyond Newport Beach. Although most of its business is a resort (it is said to be the place of choice for Angelenos who wish to conduct a discreet affair), it also attracts customers who have business in the Irvine-Newport Beach area. A new Ritz is under construction near Palm Springs.

Aside from Le Parc, places I would recommend to those not on an expensive account would include the Beverly Rodeo and the Beverly Pavilion, two sister hotels. The Beverly Rodeo is right in the middle of the shopping on Rodd Drive, making it one of the few hotels from which you can actually walk to something. The rooms are simple but spacious enough and clean. The hotel has no health club and no big public rooms, but neither do you have to pay for them: rooms start at \$103 for a single and \$123 for a double. The Beverly Pavilion, a former Holiday Inn nearby, has a pool and a highly regarded restaurant called Colette. Its rooms are slightly cheaper. The Bel Air Sands is slightly more expensive (prices start at \$115 and \$135), but it is also well situated, on the freeway to the airport and on Sunset Boulevard midway between Beverly Hills and Santa Monica; it is an elaborately redone motel, with art-deco interiors and two pools. All these hotels have restaurants. But I'm still thinking about the toasters in the Shangri-La's breakfast room, and I think I'll try them on my next trip. □

HOME

WHERE SPRAWL COMES TO SQUEEZE

Solving new problems of density in Los Angeles

BY PHILIP LANGDON

THIS IS WHAT it's like to visit a tract house of the kind now commonly being built in Southern California: You park your car on the narrow, curving street or on the house's very short driveway and proceed along an entrance walk toward the front door. If you're a non-Californian, you probably notice how inuscular the front lawn is. You don't have much opportunity to dwell on its eagerness, though, because almost immediately you find yourself passing through an arched entrance gateway or under a projecting roof and arriving in a much more alluring environment—a courtyard secluded from the street. This courtyard extends fifteen to thirty feet along one side of the house, appropriately terminating with a view of the main porch; when nicely landscaped, it counteracts the compressed feeling one gets on the street, and gives the house a certain graciousness. The more skillful firms involved in tract-house design, such as Berkus Group Architects, based in Santa Barbara, and Danielian Associates, in Irvine, almost routinely rely on such side entrance passages to relieve the sense of crowding and to create an appealing transition zone between the public street and the private interior.

Once you go inside, the space seems to open up in all directions. Often there is a foyer from which you descend a step or two into the living area. The ceiling slopes sharply upward, adding visual drama and intensifying the kinetic pleasure of walking forward into an expanding interior. Glass doors and corner windows are positioned to offer continuous views through the interior and out into the back yard, which in the model homes is nearly always furnished with a fountain, a pool, a pergola, or an elaborate patio. The back yard, with a five- or six-foot-high privacy wall around its perimeter, is not very deep, but the assumption seems to be that if you buy a house landscaped as lavishly as the model homes, you'll hardly notice that there isn't enough room for a vigorous game of

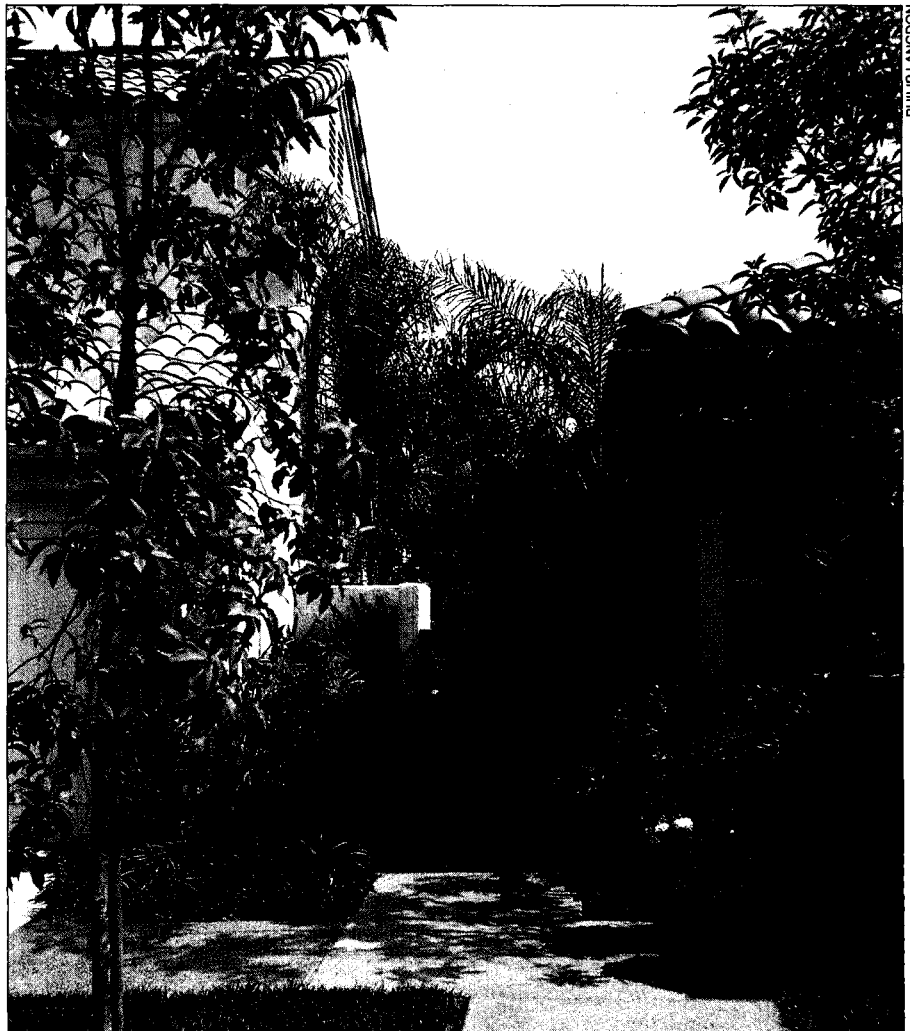
badminton. Typically the front courtyards and back yards are shielded from the neighbors' windows.

The better architects supply not only plenty of natural light and carefully organized views but also series of smaller glass panels, in sometimes artful compositions, in the walls above glass doors or corner windows, so that in addition to seeing the gorgeous if circumscribed back yard, you take in a vista of limitless sky. What's marketed is not so much land and shelter as views and style.

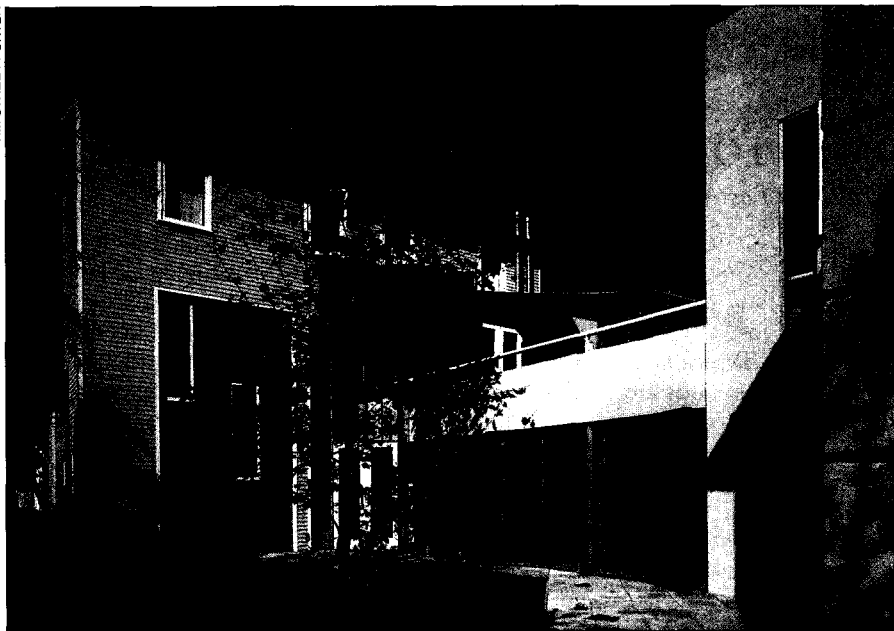
TO A NON-CALIFORNIAN, the most remarkable aspect of typical tract houses is how far people who want to buy detached houses can drive from the business centers of Los Angeles—to places like Moorpark, about forty miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles—and still end up spending as much as \$220,000 for a house on a lot only forty feet wide and about a hundred feet deep. The most successful of Southern California suburban architects have focused their energies on avoiding the feeling of being hemmed in. In fact they are packing the houses onto the land—as many as nine detached houses per acre.

It is possible, of course, to get a less expensive new house on a lot that is much larger, but the cost is an exceedingly long drive through increasingly tangled traffic. The period of the newly planted suburb that was both broadly affordable and easy to get to has pretty much ended.

The *Los Angeles Times* recently chroni-



*Westpark Promenade, Irvine (Richardson Nagy Martin):
a side entryway with lush landscaping makes a virtue of compression*



Partitions and built-ins in a Santa Monica duplex (Koning Eizenberg); new units are twice the size of previous ones on the site

cled the commuting life of a homeowner in Palmdale, on the edge of the Mojave Desert at the northern fringe of Los Angeles County, who climbs into his Ford Bronco at 6:15 every weekday morning and drives sixty-five miles—across a summit in the San Gabriel Mountains and then down the freeways of the Santa Clarita Valley and the San Fernando Valley—to get to his job with the gas company in Hollywood. On a good day the trip takes an hour and fifteen minutes one way. When traffic forms into bottlenecks, the journey drags on for two hours or more—an increasingly common length of commute.

The Bronco driver lives in Palmdale

because there his family was able to find a new house with three bedrooms and two bathrooms, on its own plot of land, in an area with relatively clean air, for \$94,000. (The median price for houses in metropolitan Los Angeles, few of them new, recently rose above \$143,000.) In Palmdale, houses on lots sixty-five feet wide and 105 feet deep sell for just under \$100,000. The result is that Palmdale, population 33,000, is now the fastest-growing city in California.

Housing at the lower end of the price range is also being built in Diamond Bar, at the far eastern edge of Los Angeles County. And huge tracts of comparatively inexpensive housing are opening up

still farther east, in San Bernardino and Riverside counties, a hot and vast area where the smog from Los Angeles accumulates. The farther north or east you go, the better your chances of finding a house at a reasonable price.

Notwithstanding the lush little backyards and entrance courtyards in some of the new subdivisions, the overall impression from street, freeway, and hilltop of an almost crushed landscape, with tiled roofs marching in every direction. Although Southern California bears the reputation of being the originator of the most extreme example of sprawl, it is caught in an ever more pressing squeeze—not a squeeze of the magnitude of New York City's but certainly a squeeze by comparison with the local conditions of a couple of decades ago. The continuing growth of population and money, much of it from outside the United States, has raised the density of development. The emerging pattern of a spread-out yet tight-grained metropolitan area is so at odds with images from the past that a new catchphrase needs to be coined. Perhaps two of the key aspects of life in Los Angeles—squeeze and sprawl—should be combined into a single term to represent the new reality; call it "squeeze-all." Every economic class in greater Los Angeles is having to accommodate itself to more intensively developed land and denser housing.

IN ALREADY-built-up older sections of the city, the size of houses is being adapted to the altered market. A longtime observer of Los Angeles growth patterns, Joseph Blackstock, the market-research director for Patrick Media Southern California's largest billboard company, and his wife, Doris, drove around their own San Gabriel Valley suburb, Alhambra, one Sunday. On streets once lined with single-story houses, they pointed out a proliferation of second stories, many of them rising abruptly from behind the center ridge post—Second World War tract houses.

In the past a family in need of more bedrooms and bathrooms and a big kitchen and living area might have moved out to a brand-new subdivision, but now, with the newly developed areas so distant and often so expensive, many people stay put and build substantial additions. Their decision is reinforced by property-tax considerations. Unlike a newly built house, which is taxed in accordance with current real estate values, an older house with a re-

addition retains some of the benefit of a property-tax assessment made years ago.

In the Westside, the generally affluent Los Angeles communities within several miles of the Pacific, the pressure of the real-estate market is reshaping many neighborhoods and introducing much bulkier development. As land prices swell, so does the volume of living space jammed onto each lot. A few years ago the small oceanfront city of Santa Monica had block after block of low-slung, pleasantly picturesque Spanish-style houses in a well-maintained area north of the Montana Avenue shopping district. The small houses from the 1920s surged in value during the real-estate boom of the late 1970s and by the early 1980s had climbed into the \$250,000 range. During the past three years prices have shot up again, and now the old single-story houses are being doubled in size or replaced altogether by two-story residences that sell for as much as \$800,000. The visual character of the neighborhoods is increasingly impressive as new or renovated 3,500- and 4,000-square-foot houses with boldly oversize windows and almost swaggeringly large arched entrances elbow their way onto 50-by-150-foot lots. Now that the cost of land has risen spectacularly, new owners conclude that what they're paying for primarily is an attractive site, in which they will build something better suited to current tastes.

Those on the bottom rungs of the economic ladder are responding to the high prices of land and housing by occupying garages that have been converted to living quarters. "When you drive the freeways through the poorer areas, look at the garages in the back yards," says William C. Baer, an associate professor of urban and regional planning at the University of Southern California. "If you see grates over the windows or a vent or TV antenna on the roof, it means someone is probably living there." According to a *Los Angeles Times* survey, 10,000 garages are inhabited, most of them illegally—many by Mexicans who, because of their poverty and sometimes their status as illegal aliens, are in no position to complain to building officials if their homes lack, as many do, adequate plumbing, electricity, or heat.

Inadequate or not, the illegal garage dwellings are unlikely to be subject to more than scattered crackdowns. The need for affordable housing is too great. When middle-class people are occupying, I would surmise, a sizable number



ERIC FIGGE



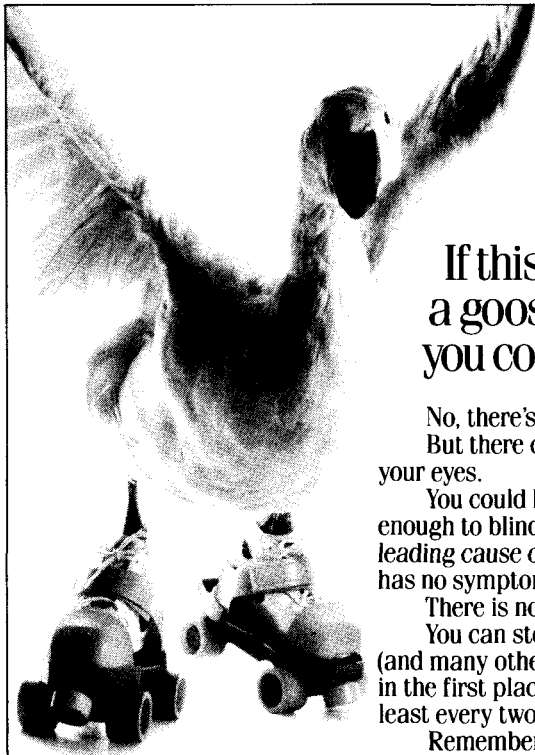
JOHN R. BAER

Walled-in demesne in Irvine (Danielian Associates): window treatments in a small house foster the illusion of spaciousness

of illegal housing units—quietly converted and upgraded outbuildings, apartments carved out of old houses, and probably additions built without permits as well. Owners of such unapproved auxiliary units sometimes depend on the rental income to help meet their mortgage payments. Legal or illegal, a great deal of construction intended to create additional housing units is taking place on properties that already contain houses.

In Santa Monica's artsy, jumbled Ocean Park neighborhood, where one-time beach shacks on thirty-foot-wide lots sell for \$200,000, new buildings rise on any unused portions of the land, and

additions pop upward and outward in myriad shapes and styles. For some architectural firms, like Moore Ruble Yudell and Koning Eizenberg, both of Santa Monica, the housing crush has brought opportunities to produce cleverly designed tiny houses and apartments. By building in furniture, by establishing changes of level within small open-plan apartments, and by using partly cut-out partition walls that define various areas without closing off views, designers have produced interesting miniature housing units that work well for one- or two-person households. But the filling in and up of established neighborhoods is coming at the considerable cost of



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public quarreling over how much additional construction can be tolerated at what character it should have. Los Angeles is no longer a region with the ample room for maneuvering that Reyn Banham admired so strongly when I wrote what is still the best architectural history of the area, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1971). Dispar pressure groups are gearing up for what promise to be drawn-out fights over housing questions.

IS THIS STRICTLY a California story? I don't think so. Real-estate prices have similarly exploded in Boston, western Connecticut, downstate New York, New Jersey, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. From the summer of 1986 to the summer of 1987 the median house price in the northeastern United States jumped 37 percent, or \$38,600, to match the price of housing in Los Angeles. Some of the stories now heard in the Northeast are remarkably like those told in California—tales of people commuting daily from Cape Cod to Boston, from eastern Pennsylvania to Manhattan, because they want a decent house on a normal-size lot. Areas already built up are feeling pressure for additional housing. In Levittown, Long Island, once synonymous with single-family housing at bargain prices, access to apartments are being carved out of parcels of the expanded and now expensive postwar tract dwellings. In blue-collar towns like West Haven, Connecticut, developers are shoe-horning tight rows of townhouses onto any leftover parcels of land they can find, to accommodate the bursting demand for housing. In New Haven, where I live, unauthorized apartments in older houses have grown so common that the city zoning director recently warned that there would be a severe housing shortage if the rule against illegal conversions were suddenly enforced.

Some of Southern California's responses to the overwhelming real-estate demand, such as detached houses with minuscule, walled-in back yards and courtyards, will undoubtedly win only limited acceptance in regions accustomed to open suburban landscapes. But on the whole, Los Angeles indicates directions in which more and more America's housing will be heading. The squeeze is on. Particularly in this country's most prosperous metropolitan areas, significant adjustments in the housing market are in the making. □

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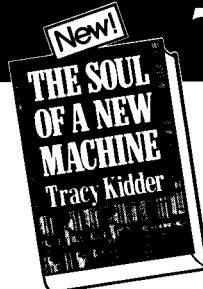
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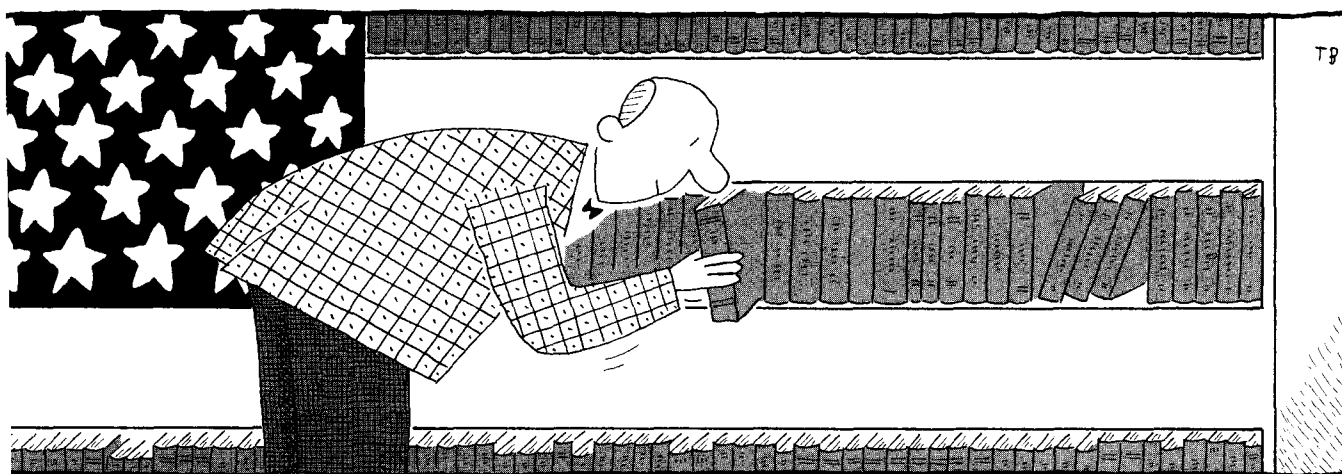
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BOOKS



NATIVE GROUND

BY ANTHONY BURGESS

COLUMBIA LITERARY HISTORY
OF THE UNITED STATES
edited by Emory Elliott.
Columbia University Press, \$59.95.

THE QUESTION MUST be asked, What do we mean by a national literature? is easily answered in respect of countries like, say, Albania, whose language coextensive with history and territory; is not so easily answered as regards Italy and Greece, where historical continuity is denied by the change from a classical language to a modern one and, in any case, by a large number of dialects that have full linguistic status—here, too, the very concept of nation is a fairly recent manufacture. With America, limits have to be artificially imposed. This colossal survey (1,384 pages) has found room for the American languages, and for Hispanic writers, Asiatic immigrants, and Jews, like Isaac Bashevis Singer, who have clung to Yiddish. But the major problem is finding a dividing line between the literature of a colonial people and that of an independent one, and dealing with that modern reversal whereby Henry James and T. S. Eliot ceased to be American and became British, while Christopher Marlowe and W. H. Auden—not notably dealt with in this book—abandoned England and became, respectively, a Californian and a New Yorker. It is probably not enough to limit the literature of the United States to what has been written in English on American soil below

the Great Lakes and the forty-ninth parallel. It is better, and more in keeping with the patriotic tendency that wants to chart a national literature, to look for a definable American quality, though being prepared to see it shade off into recidivistic Britishness or expand into internationalism. We have no trouble with Mark Twain and Walt Whitman, who are as American as that British invention the apple pie, but James is a great nuisance and so, notoriously, is Ezra Pound, whose Americanism is defined through treason.

Though Mistress Anne Bradstreet was born in Northampton, England, and was already eighteen when she sailed on the *Arabella*, on her way to settle in Massachusetts, her adult poetry is undeniably American, in that it was written within the sound of Indian war whoops and chuckling turkeys. It is also colonial, in that it is far from any heart of literary culture that could refine it. Addressing her own book of poems, she wrote:

In this array 'mongst vulgars
may'st thou roam.
In critic's hands beware thou
dost not come,
If for thy father asked, say thou
hadst none;
And for thy mother, she alas is
poor,
Which caused her thus to send
thee out of door.

This is provincial verse, or doggerel, but that does not matter so long as it is American. The homage due to Bradstreet, and duly paid by John Berryman, has little to do with literary merit.

America needed primitivism, the sense of a stumbling amateur striving to-

ward a hard-won perfection and not quite reaching it. The achieved rejected society of Great Britain was not in accord with a beleaguered Puritan society trying to build a new nation from scratch. And yet when that new nation achieved independence, was not the voice of its prose style very much that of Augustan deist London? Has there ever been finer English prose than this, which is altogether American?

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

The chauvinistic desire to believe in the existence of an American language, altogether sundered from the mother tongue, impelled the Teuton H. L. Mencken to proclaim a kind of linguistic independence, stressing divergence and wishing to deny uniformity. The truth is that British and American English are virtually the same, that the differences in syntax and usage are minimal, and that mutual understanding of literary texts is total. Speech is a different matter, and it was only when American literature shed its formality and admitted the colloquial that it was possible to speak of a new, homegrown tradition. It had to begin humorously, even facetiously, as in James Russell Lowell's *The Biglow Papers*:

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MISTER EDDYTER:

Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he sees a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and ffin arter him like all nater, the sarjunt he thout Hosea hedn't gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo's though he'd jest com down, so he cal-'lated to hook him in. . . .

With Mark Twain the humor was to be enclosed in a more complex view of the comic. It may be said that with the coming of Mark Twain and Walt Whitman it became impossible for an Englishman to write like an American, though an American had no reciprocal problem. A colonial literature enclosed that of the mother country. With Whitman it was a matter of subject; with Twain it was a question of vision, scenic idiom, ethos—the literary totality.

SO I, BRITISH-BORN, though in European exile and once an adoptive New Yorker, look at a literature that has modified my sensibility quite as much as that of my native country—in some ways more so, since I consider myself kind of rebel against the British establishment. This literature is surveyed in the *Columbia Literary History* at such length, and with such skill, that it defeats the reviewer's duty to seek fault and impels him to a praise only partially qualified. It is not often that a reviewer will admit the reader into his workshop, but I think it is necessary now. The surveying of the survey, which must be done well in advance of the readying of the book for publication, imposes the reading of eight hundred long galleries fixed together with stout hoops, as yet undisciplined with an index, unmappped with paginations in the contents section. The reading has been a muscular business, and it has strained the nerves, to But the major problem remains one of generalization: How can I sum up the work?

It is a pentateuch. The Book of Genesis takes us from the beginning through the colonial and transition eras, to the emergence of the literature of the republic. The second main section covers the years from 1810 to 1860 beginning with Washington Irving at the Knickerbocker group and ending with Walt Whitman. The major voices of the period 1865 to 1910 are Emily Dickinson, Mark Twain, Henry Adams, and Henry James, with other writers treated in the summary form that clarifies

'movements"—regionalism, naturalism imported from Europe), the march of the women. From 1910 to 1945 the claims of "ethnicity and gender" pre-ominate, with Robert Frost, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, and William Faulkner demanding the attention of shared chapters, except for Frost and Faulkner, who get chapters to themselves. The final section takes us from the end of the Second World War to the present day, when the abundance of American writing forbids capitular hegemony of names and imposes generalities like neo-realist fiction, self-reflexive fiction, literature as radical statement, the avant-garde, and experimental writing.

We seem to be past the age when it is as possible for a single, or at most double, vision of a national literature to be written, comparable to the efforts of the Frenchmen Legouis and Cazamian, in parting British literature from *Beowulf* to Wells. The Columbia history presents a unified point of view: it is synoptic, the work having been parceled out among distinguished scholars, not all American. In this sense the survey is highly democratic: a survey of Soviet literature would impose a centralized vision, blinkered by a concern with ideological orthodoxy and dissatisfied with the criterion of purely aesthetic merit. The aesthetic comes first with these scholars. Ties with the mother country are frankly admitted, and it is accepted, for instance, that certain currents of libertarian thought owe as much to British Whiggery as to American radicalism. Philosophy, which may or may not be a branch of literature, has its place. Such best sellers as Herman Wouk and Sinclair Lewis (though some of us non-Americans might argue that books like *Unghblood Hawke* and *Babbitt* tell us more about the United States than do *The Golden Bowl* and *Hugh Selwyn Maureley*) are hardly considered. What early emerges over the course of the long chronicle is a growth of confidence: when the United States entered the twentieth century and felt the political and economic confidence of a world power, American culture, too, became self-assertive and began to influence the world, to which it had formerly seen itself as a kind of cultural annex. National power is bound to affect literature—which is, after all, the way certain enlightened citizens of a nation express themselves—and the prestige of so

much contemporary American writing reflects the prestige of the nation that begot it.

And yet American literature is essentially subversive. It does not boost America, except satirically. Thoreau denied the rights of the state, and Whitman proclaimed the need for much resistance and little obedience. When the political watchword was progress, Henry Adams prophesied entropy. No major American author has wagged the flag. Landscape may be lyrically exalted, the great cities feared and loved, but American literature rarely expresses devotion to the concept of the nation.

This is one of the generalizations that one can make about this vast subject. The other, which this mammoth chronicle perhaps fails sufficiently to bring out, has to do with what American writers have done with their raw material, which is not a subject matter but a language. Dickinson and Whitman, long before Ezra Pound's injunction to "make it new," were among the remakers of English. Stein and Hemingway, working in Paris, saw Joyce depending for novelty on the satirization of outmoded forms; they themselves found new forms. What has happened to English in the hands of Americans is the real story of American literature. □

WHY SOCRATES WAS KILLED

BY BERNARD KNOX

THE TRIAL OF SOCRATES

by I. F. Stone.

Little, Brown, \$18.95.

I FIRST MET THE author of this book in the early seventies, when I was the director of Harvard's Center for Hellenic Studies, in Washington. He had already, for health reasons, closed down the remarkable *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, a classic of investigative reporting whose issues were awaited with eager anticipation by most of its subscribers but with nervous apprehension by the White House staff or at the Pentagon. In his retirement he had gone back to the study of ancient Greek, which he had started years before, in college. Greek, he had discovered, was an indispensable tool for his major project, a history of free speech. This was a concept that had first seen

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the light in the context of Athenian democracy in the fifth century B.C., and Stone had found that “one could not make vital political or philosophical inferences from translations, not because the translators were incompetent but because the Greek terms were not fully congruent . . . with their English equivalents.” One chapter in this book, in fact, is devoted to a study of the four ancient Greek words for “free speech.” But his studies in Greek literature brought him squarely up against the problem of the trial and execution of Socrates, who was convicted not of offenses against the law but on vague charges that barely masked an intolerance of his opinions and teaching.

I saw much of Stone in the ensuing years, as he studied in the library of the

for the prosecution.” Our picture of the event is based exclusively on accounts written by admiring disciples of the defendant: the gossipy memoirs of Xenophon and the portrait of Socrates, in debate and in the courtroom, drawn by a philosopher pupil who was also a literary genius—Plato, son of Ariston.

Plato’s unforgettable re-creation of Socrates’ life and death presents us with a puzzle: How could the fifth-century Athenians, of all people, put to death the wise, witty, and noble figure we see at intellectual work and play in the dialogues? The trial, Stone says in his preface, “was a black mark for Athens and the freedom it symbolized. . . . How could Athens have been so untrue to itself?” He set out to discover “how it could have happened” and to uncover

denying the fundamental democratic principle that all citizens possessed the modicum of understanding needed to run their common affairs. “If few of us are originators,” Pericles said in his Funeral Speech, “we are all sound judges of a policy.” Lastly, Socrates “preached and practiced withdrawal from the political life of the city,” a far cry from the ideal of citizen participation proclaimed in the Funeral Speech: “If a man take no interest in public affairs we . . . do not commend him as quiet but consider him useless.”

Socrates’ distaste for democracy was not merely theoretical but was accompanied by a snobbish contempt for the men who constituted the bulk of the democratic assembly. “Dunces and weaklings,” Socrates called them, according to Xenophon, “fullers, cobblers, builders, smiths, farmers, merchants and traders.” This contempt for the common man was combined with an admiration for the regimented way of life of Athens’ opponent, Sparta. But these sentiments were not unique with Socrates. They were the age-old prejudices of Athenian aristocrats, the clichés of oligarchic conspirators. And two of Socrates’ young associates, Charmides and Critias, were prominent members of the so-called Thirty Tyrants, who, with Spartan garrison in support, imposed a reign of terror on a defeated Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War. Another young associate of Socrates’, Alcibiades, deserted to the Spartans whose political enemies made capital of his licentious way of life to bring charges of impiety against him. The advice he gave the Spartans resulted in tremendous damage to Athenian interests.

But when Socrates was arraigned in 399 B.C., his unpopular views had been common knowledge for years: Aristophanes’ *Clouds* (423 B.C.) was neither the first nor the last comic travesty of his personality and teaching. Socrates was seventy years old. The Athenians had submitted to his infuriating questioning for decades. Why did they suddenly decide to prosecute him? Why not wait for this eccentric figure to give their ears a rest by dying a natural death?

Stone attributes the decision to what he calls the “Three Earthquakes”: the temporary overthrow of the democracy by oligarchic conspirators, in 411; the ascendance of the Spartan-backed regime of the Thirty Tyrants, in 404; and, in 401, just two years before the trial, the



Center. We often discussed Greek texts (he was reading the *Oresteia* and Plato as well), and I heard him lecture on the problem of Socrates’ execution as he tried out his ideas before scholarly audiences. When the book was ready for the press, I was called in as a technical adviser on such small but worrisome matters as the transliteration of Greek names. So, though I cannot claim to have been present at the conception, I was there, so to speak, for the gestation and the birth, and have now been invited to report on the well-being of the offspring, *The Trial of Socrates*.

As any reader of *I. F. Stone’s Weekly* could have predicted, it is a lively specimen, a challenging investigative probe of the evidence. Stone has read the texts the way he did the *Pentagon Papers*—with an eye for the significant detail and the latent connection. His book is an attempt to reconstruct the “missing case

the real, unspoken charges that Socrates was facing.

He finds the grounds for Athenian hostility to Socrates in “three basic philosophical questions” on which Socrates “differed . . . profoundly” from his fellow citizens “and, indeed, from the ancient Greeks generally.” The first and most serious disagreement was over the nature of the human community. For most ancient Greeks it was a *polis*, a city-state ruled by its citizens; for Socrates it was a “herd,” which had to be ruled by a “shepherd,” or, as he often puts it in Plato’s dialogues, “by one who knows”—government by an expert. The second disagreement stemmed from Socrates’ conviction that virtue is knowledge. But since—as his search for definitions by cross-examination so often and so brilliantly revealed—true knowledge is almost impossible to attain, this position reinforced the first,

unsuccessful attempt by members of the Thirty to renew the civil war. The generous terms of the amnesty proclaimed when the democracy had been restored in 403 had ruled out the possibility of referring in court to Socrates' political opinions and his close association with oligarchic leaders. But the revolutionary upheavals of the closing years of the century had eroded the Athenians' tolerance for Socrates' radical critiques of their cherished democratic institutions. It was no accident that among the three citizens who indicted Socrates (there was no public prosecutor in Athens) the most prominent, Anytus, had gone into exile when the Thirty took over, had had his property confiscated, and had been a leader in the armed resistance that restored the democracy in 403.

It is clear, however, that by no means all Athenians believed that Socrates deserved punishment, and it seems likely that a few still imagined that he would be put to death. Even though he made a defiant speech in court, provoking an uproar in the audience on more than one occasion, the verdict against him was tried by an astonishingly small majority: if thirty of the 500 jurors had voted the other way, he would have been acquitted—as he might well have been if he made a less recalcitrant speech in his defense. (According to Xenophon, Socrates was advised to do so but refused.) The penalty was to be decided by the jury's choice between proposals made by the two parties to the case; the prosecutors asked for death. The figures for and against acquittal suggest strongly that the jury would have accepted a reasonable alternative—a fine, for example. But Socrates proposed that he be awarded free meals in the Prytaneum, the committee room of the city's representatives; this was a privilege reserved for foreign ambassadors, Olympic victors, and heroes of the democracy. He withdrew this astonishing proposal and offered to pay a fine, but the damage was done. The jury voted for death, 360 to 29. "Socrates himself," Stone writes, seems to put the hemlock to his lips."

STONE HAS MADE an eloquent and forceful plea for a measure of sympathy with the Athenians, a better understanding of the hostility that Socrates' oversive dialectic aroused in a city that had twice suffered under an oligarchic reign of terror. But this is not an apologia for the trial. "I could not defend the verdict when I started," he

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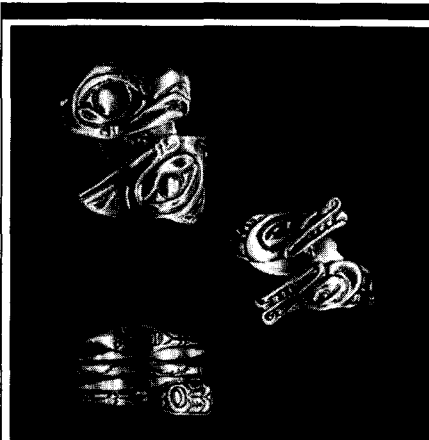
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writes, "and I cannot defend it now. . . ." What he offers is a corrective to the one-sided picture of Socrates drawn by his disciples.

Stone's adversary is, of course, Plato. If we had only Xenophon's uninspired *Memorabilia* to go by, Socrates would never have become the awesome figure we know so well: philosophy's first martyr, the secular saint whom Erasmus was tempted to include among the recipients of his prayers ("Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis"). This Socrates, philosophy's tragic hero, is the creation of Plato, who invented a new literary form, the philosophical prose drama, which in his hands marshaled the deepest notes of Attic tragedy and the brilliant wit of Attic comedy to impose on succeeding ages a vision of his beloved teacher which is

almost irresistible. Stone, who is as charmed by Plato's poetry as he is appalled by his principles, has tried "to find out what Plato does not tell us, to give the Athenian side of the story, to mitigate the city's crime and thereby remove some of the stigma the trial left on democracy and on Athens."

Even Plato's most loyal admirers will have to concede that Stone has to some extent succeeded. But Plato will probably have the last word. *His* Socrates, a combination of fact and fiction in proportions that have always been a mystery, will retain his hold on our imaginations. Pindar said it long ago: "The charm of poetry, which creates all delights for mankind, confers authority on what is unbelievable, and makes it believed." □

trolled battles by riding observant about the field. Grant collected information by telegraph on the sidelines. Hitler, in addition to other deficiencies the author does not overlook, burrowed in bunkers miles from the action. The military history Mr. Keegan provides consistently interesting, but the final chapter, in which he projects the style leadership that he foresees as necessary in the atomic age, is startling as thought-provoking as well.

PETER PAUL RUBENS by *Christopher White*. Yale University Press, \$65.00. happiness consists of public honor, domestic comfort, and high pay for work that one thoroughly enjoys doing, Rubens must have been an enviably happy man. He was also, to judge from his success in bewitching even the protocol mad king of Spain, a man of enormous charm and tact, with learning that encompassed the classical past and the developing present. He once tracked down and examined an alleged perpetual-motion machine, reporting to a friend that it was nonsense. As a renowned painter he was welcome anywhere, and did considerable service as a semi-undercover diplomat. He maintained what amounted to a private museum and did a bit of art dealing in a meticulously honest way. No biographer can make high drama out of a life of almost unmitigated success and Mr. White wisely does not try. What he adds to the available facts about Rubens is explication of the symbolism built into the man's exuberantly baroque paintings. It is worthwhile to be reminded, while admiring the excellent reproductions in this book, of the layers of mythological, botanical, religious, and heraldic meaning that the painter conceived. Every putto had a purpose.

THE SHIPS OF JOHN PAUL JONES by *William Gilkerson*. Naval Institute Press, \$32.95. Mr. Gilkerson is primarily known as a marine artist expert in the depiction of antique vessels, along with the costumes and equipment of the men who sailed in them. He is as well a writer whose brisk, simple prose admirably complements his drawings of Jones in various commands, in and out of battle.

BAD ACTS AND GUILTY MINDS by *John Katz*. University of Chicago Press, \$29.95 and \$14.95. A, a poor marksman, intended to shoot B but kills C by mistake. Is he guilty of murder? X attempts the illegal removal from his country of an official

BRIEF REVIEWS



CONVERSATIONS WITH LORD BYRON ON PERVERSION, 163 YEARS AFTER HIS LORDSHIP'S DEATH by *Amanda Praeger*. Atheneum, \$16.95. The initial force in this clever, quirky novel is a professor who has spent thirty years trying to find out what intelligence is and privately suspects that his latest experiment is the usual blind alley. He has caused a computer to be programmed to represent Lord Byron's brain, but the machine, alias LB, has so far declined to identify Thyrza. Anna, the assistant who deals directly with the machine, has meanwhile discovered that it cracks jokes, flirts with her, impishly evades questions, and occasionally takes offense, whereupon it turns itself off and runs out blank paper for hours. What LB is recalling while the empty paper rolls out is the substance of a tale that leaves the reader both amused and mildly alarmed for Anna's future, for even when computerized, his lordship remains dangerous to know.

THE MEMOIRS OF ETHEL SMYTH abridged and introduced by *Ronald Chrichton*. Viking, \$19.95. Those familiar with the papers of Virginia Woolf will recognize Ethel Smyth as the aging and in her own opinion underappreciated composer whose lesbian devotion Woolf found something of a trial. In addition to being

a musician, Smyth (1848–1944) was a traveler, an impassioned suffragette (she once went to jail for the cause), and a gadabout whose connections ranged from Brahms to the Empress Eugenie. She also produced a voluminous autobiography, and Mr. Chrichton's abridgment of these memoirs reveals a character rather different from the faintly comic "battling dame" described elsewhere. Smyth was a woman of exceptional courage and determination and a constant observer of the world around her. Her descriptions of a provincial German ball or a performance before Queen Victoria bring the horrors of the first and the starchy peculiarities of the second vividly to life. She wrote so well, in fact, that the shortened version of her memoirs tempts one to hunt up the complete text—all nine volumes of it.

THE MASK OF COMMAND by *John Keegan*. Viking, \$18.95. Mr. Keegan describes styles of military leadership as exemplified by Alexander the Great, the Duke of Wellington, Ulysses S. Grant, and Adolf Hitler, naming them, respectively, heroic, anti-heroic, unheroic, and false heroic. The shifts from one manner to the next he attributes to changes in weaponry but even more to changes in communication. Alexander led charges in person—he had to. Wellington con-

tional treasure that proves on examination to be a fake. Is X guilty of anything? At the time Mr. Katz has expounded, the excursions into philosophy, psychology, and precedent, the ramifications of a number of such "conundrums of the minimal law," the lay reader can only marvel that any court ever arrives at a verdict.

ODOR DOSTOYEVSKY by Geir Kjetsaa. *Viking, \$24.95.* To reduce Dostoyevsky's work, with its melodramatic roller coaster from early promise, Siberian prison, family squabbles, gambling sprees, public acclaim, and financial chaos, to a sound biography of reasonable length is an achievement verging on the awesome. Professor Kjetsaa has done it, however, the room left over for intelligent analysis of Dostoyevsky's writings and ideas. The biographer concedes that Dostoyevsky's political pronouncements in sometimes appear both naive and self-contradictory" but adds that he possessed "a great vision of mankind united in brotherhood and a burning faith in the value of the ideal in a materialistic age."

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE: ONE HUNDRED FLOWERS edited by Nicholas Callaway. *opf, \$100.00.* Because a flower is "relatively small," O'Keeffe decided, "I'll paint what I see—what the flower is to me—but I'll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it . . ." What she saw was violent color, monumental shape, and texture ranging from the transparency of gauze to the solidity of basalt. The world at its wildest and loveliest is in those paintings, and it is a delight to have a hundred of them well reproduced in this very large and very handsome volume.

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE: ART AND LETTERS by Jack Cowart and Juan Hamilton, with letters selected and annotated by Sarah Cowart. *Little, Brown/New York Graph Society, \$50.00.* Reminiscences of O'Keeffe by Mr. Cowart and Mr. Hamilton accompany reproductions of work from every stage of her long and impressive career. The artist's spontaneous, colloquial, scatter-shot letters are not at all what her reputation for austerity suggests; they are one to expect, and all the more interesting for their element of surprise.

PERFORATED AIR by Ethan Canin. *oughton Mifflin, \$15.95.* Three of the stories in this volume were originally published in *The Atlantic*.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

Answers to the December Puzzles

"SEGMENTS"

1. CAVE 2. QUE(AS)DER 3. PO(UT) 4. PAWN-(S)EE(s) 5. TU(NIC (rev.) 6. ASEPTIC (anag.) 7. SERAIS (anag.) 8. DUE-NNA (*Ann* rev.) 9. LAUGH-TON (pun) 10. HEARS(E) 11. F(R)AT 12. A(BY)SS 13. NO(V)EL 14. S(M)OCKS 15. DIALER (rev.) 16. DE(C)REES (*see red* rev.) 17. LIMN (homophone) 18. A-XES (*sex* rev.) 19. DESTINED (anag.) 20. PLATTE(r) 21. APPRO-N 22. BLAH (odd letters) 23. STEELS (rev.) 24. JO(CO)SE (*Joe's* anag.) 25. NEU(ter)-RON 26. JA-PAN 27. DI-S(M)AYS 28. CASHIER 29. SUMMARY (homophone) 30. JUNK-IEST (*I set* anag.) 31. F-ETOR (rev.) 32. ERA-TO 33. J(y)CULEPS 34. OCTANE (anag.) 35. (g)ALLEYS 36. FEBRILE (anag.) 37. TENURES (anag.) 38. J-ANGLES 39. LIGHTER (double def.) 40. BRA(H[i])MS(s)

J	A	N	G	L	E	S	A	B	L	A	H
A	X	E	S	I	F	E	B	R	I	L	E
P	S	U	M	M	A	R	Y	A	D	L	A
A	P	R	O	N	C	A	S	H	I	E	R
N	Q	O	C	L	D	I	S	M	A	Y	S
J	U	N	K	I	E	S	T	S	L	S	E
P	E	D	S	G	S	J	U	L	E	P	S
L	A	U	G	H	T	O	N	F	R	A	T
A	S	E	P	T	I	C	I	E	C	W	E
T	I	N	O	E	N	O	C	T	A	N	E
T	E	N	U	R	E	S	N	O	V	E	L
E	R	A	T	O	D	E	C	R	E	E	S

ACROSTIC NO. 29

"It was a shock for me quite late in life to discover that Jean Cocteau and Jacques Cousteau were not even related. Meaning . . . was unstable and could not survive the slightest reshuffling of letters. One gust of wind and Santa became Satan."

—Lorrie Moore, *Anagrams: A Novel*

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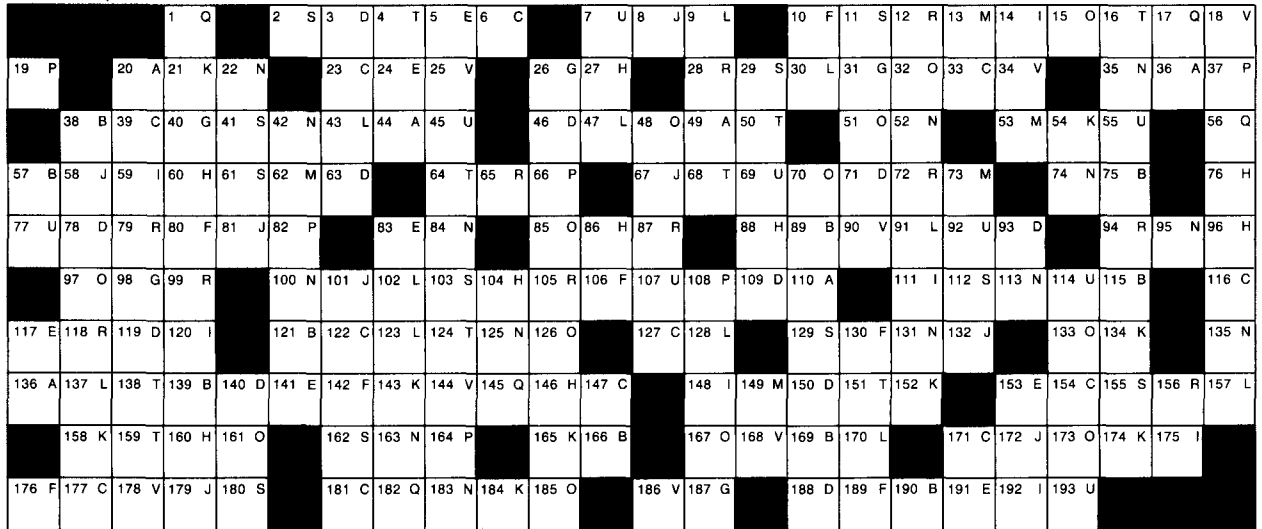


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ACROSTIC No. 30

BY DOROTHY OSBORNE

The letters of clue answers, when put in the appropriately numbered squares, will spell out a quotation. The first letters of clue answers spell the author and source of the quotation.



The solution to Acrostic No. 29 appears on page 95.

A. Fatimid or Assassin

49 36 136 44 20 110

B. Available (3 wds.)

139 121 75 166 38 115 89 57 190 169

C. English poet of noble birth (2 wds.)

33 6 177 116 39 147 127 171 23
154 122 181

D. "The Father of Waters"

140 71 119 93 150 46 63 3 78
188 109

E. Outcast of Genesis

83 141 117 153 24 5 191

F. Textile worker who protested the use of machinery

10 189 106 176 130 142 80

G. Jitterbug dance

31 26 187 98 40

H. "Like a patient _____ upon a table": T. S. Eliot

96 27 86 146 104 60 76 160 88

I. TV western about a cattle drive

175 111 148 59 192 14 120

J. Callaghan's successor

179 172 101 67 58 8 132 81

K. Retire (3 wds.)

152 174 165 158 54 184 21 143 134

L. Broadway star in *Girl Crazy* (2 wds.)

9 157 170 91 47 102 30 137 43
123 1

M. War of 1812 treaty site

73 149 62 13 53

N. Just in case (3 wds., hyph.)

74 183 35 95 22 113 131 52 135
42 163 84 100 1

O. Clubby group in power (3 wds.)

51 32 126 133 48 161 185 173 85
167 97 15

P. Atacama or Thar

164 37 82 66 108 19

Q. Poseur of the animal world

17 182 56 1 145

R. Easily solvable (hyph.)

118 79 87 72 105 156 99 28 65
12

S. Corrupt political machine of New York (2 wds.)

41 11 112 29 103 61 180 162 155
129

T. Director of *Lifeboat*

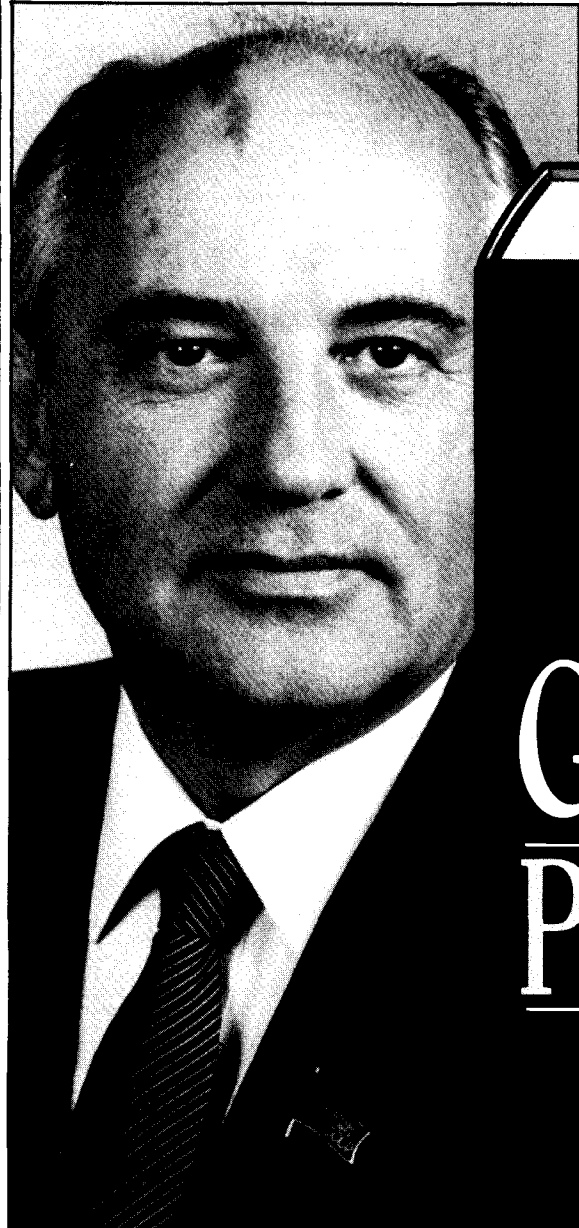
50 68 64 151 159 138 16 124 4

U. Deviating from the norm

107 69 45 55 114 7 92 77 193

V. Time of need or adversity (2 wds.)

178 168 186 144 90 34 18 25



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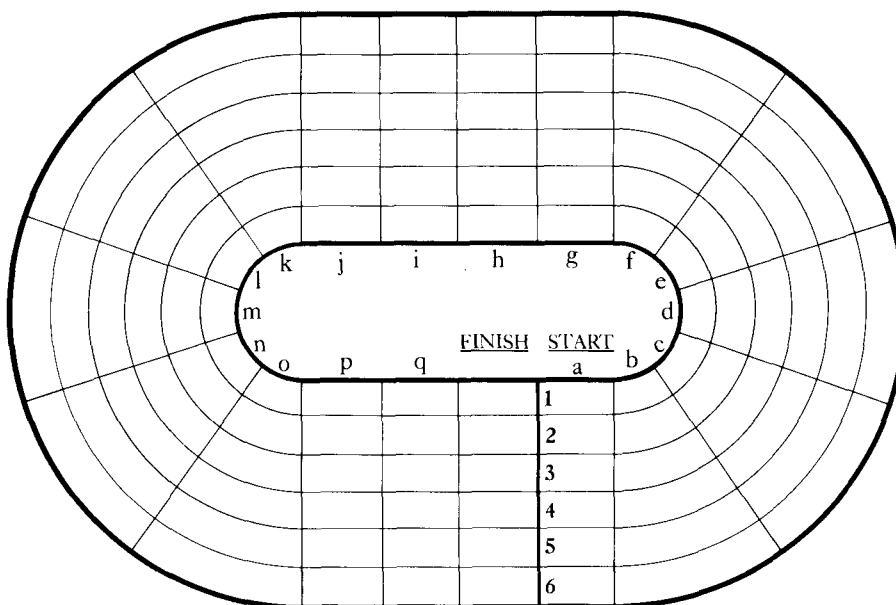
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THE PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

AT THE RACES

There are six numbered race entrants, each using three clue answers to go around the course from START to FINISH. Each entrant starts in its correspondingly numbered lane, but at each radial line two (and only two) adjacent entrants swap lanes. Racers' lane positions along the way may be determined with the help of the six-letter words a–q, which are entered radially from inside to outside lanes. The finishing order of the racers (from inside lane to outside) also spells out the winner of this cryptic race. Answers include four proper nouns; all other words may be found in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.



The answers to last month's Puzzler appear on page 95.

ENTRANTS

The one owned by Charles is a skeleton (7)
 One set for patron (5)
 Constituent bit of most coal (6)
 Get old article about eastern sea (6)
 Hot out of excitement, quaver (5)
 Back last pony, not first (7)
 Problem in Derby detains attendant (6)
 Try, in English, "over and out" (8)
 Talk into chamber in the ear (4)
 Pick out celery's heart the wrong way (5)
 Mother turned legendary murderer psychotic (6)
 Boob tube carries a live broadcast in Middle Eastern city (7) (*two words*)

- #5 Arctic explorer bottles excellent wines (5)
 Lie level (5)
 Moving van reads "Stoops" (8)
- #6 Start off sampler with flower (5)
 Gets over gout, changing ways (8)
 Top-velocity circuit brings cheer (5)

RADIAL WORDS

- a. Movie producer nearly arrived on time
 b. Sun god rejected earth, wouldn't you say?
 c. A fellow's representatives
 d. Withdraw from southeast, and transfer
 e. Discussed flight goggles
- f. Cretan king adopts royal children
 g. Crafty pharaoh splitting sea anew
 h. Embalming stuff to treat skin returned by Reagan
 i. Bergman is in *Network*
 j. Drink containing red, green, and yellow sock
 k. Alcove needs remodeling to be contemporary
 l. 55 taken in time—small number
 m. Kid about empty room in speech
 n. Raised around Los Angeles, honked
 o. Raced with the result that 1000 demanded money
 p. Modifying word of victory in a short Kentucky race
 q. Grip aluminum in clamp

e: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

WORD WATCH

BY ANNE H. SOUKHANOV

blendo *noun*, a style of interior decoration that mixes high-tech, Eurostyle, and antique furnishings into an integrated, individualistic whole. "One style . . . is . . . commonly called *blendo*. It's getting a lot of play" (Hatfield, Mass., *Valley Advocate*).

BACKGROUND: According to a recent article in the *Advocate*, titled "Help! Somebody Get Me an Ambience!" the *blendo* ideal is achieved through the interplay of vivid colors, different textures, and radically opposed materials and forms such as "marble against stainless steel and brass, soaring arches jammed up against rectangles, metal pipe and mesh." (*High tech* is characterized by the use of traditionally industrial products such as baked-enamel factory lampshades and plastic-coated grid-mesh. *Eurostyle* employs clean, lean, modular furniture made of synthetic materials.) The word *blendo* is a new example of the productivity of the suffix *-o* with respect to imaginative new words. This suffix, often used in Australian English, can be appended to nouns to form words like *bucko*, *kiddo*, and *boy-o*. Used with adjectives, it produces words like *cheapo*, *deado*, *pinko*, *nutso*, *weirdo*, and *wacko*. It also can be employed in the formation of interjections, such as *cheerio*, *righto*, and *blasto*. When *-o* is appended to clipped forms, one gets *ammo* and *combo*, for example. The suffix is not used in the word *gonzo*, however. The English *gonzo* comes from the Italian word of the same spelling, meaning "idiot."

infomercial *noun*, a brand-specific television semidocumentary, lasting from three to sixty minutes, that imparts consumer information (for example, on health care, travel, shopping, or finance) and also subtly invites viewers to buy the sponsor's product or service. "Each program contains two *infomercials*, which identify the sponsor and explore a topic relating to child development

Here are a few of the words being tracked by the editors of The American Heritage Dictionary, published by Houghton Mifflin. A new word that exhibits sustained use may eventually make its way into the dictionary. The information below represents the first stage of research, not the final product.

such as play, imagination or language. There is no overt pitch for the product" (Associated Press).

BACKGROUND: "I take credit for coining [*infomercial*], even though everybody else has used it," said Michael E. Marcovsky, a cable-TV consultant and the president of Marnel Associates, in Los Angeles, during a United Press International interview in 1982. "When we were at QUBE, we had a form called the *infomercial* and it was an information, or antiprogram, segment. . . . I never had one complaint from a consumer about an *infomercial*." Infomercials can be short spots, inserted into regular programs, or they can constitute full programs. Companies are now using video-cassette infomercials in the direct marketing of insurance, oil-well investments as tax shelters, and liquor, among other products.

mamou *noun*, something very big or important, such as a key objective or a crucial maneuver fraught with risk. "It was becoming clear that we needed to do something bigger—much bigger. It was time for the big *mamou*" (T. Boone Pickens, Jr., *Boone*).

BACKGROUND: It is possible that the meaning of *mamou* in this sense is derived from the name of the Louisiana town Mamou, which is renowned as the Cajun Music Capital of the World and calls itself the home of the first and most authentic Mardi Gras. The town was immortalized as "the Big Mamou" in "La Chanson des Mardi-Gras." The origin of *mamou* itself is unknown. An article that appeared in *The Mamou Acadian Press* in 1986 states, "There are many stories about the name MAMOU. One was the legendary Indian, Chief Mamou. It is certain that [the] vast prairie [in

southwestern Louisiana, consisting of more than 1.2 million acres] was known as Mamou Prairie as far back as the 1700s and that the Anglo-American first called it the 'Mammou Prairie' because of its immense size. And when the French came they called it 'Mamou' for mammoth." There is also a line of possible connection between *mamou* and the French words *mammouth* for "mammoth" and *mamelu*, meaning person with sharply pronounced breasts, as in *une grosse mamelue*. Frederic G. Cassidy, the chief editor of the *Dictionary of American Regional English*, said in a letter that he was "pretty sure that *mamou* French." He added, "To me *mamou* is a baby-talk [hypocritical] variant of French *mama* parallel to our *mamma*, British *mummy*, etc. Used by adults these terms of affection often become ironic or even satirical, in our use of 'What a mamm' 'She's a big mamma.' The French do this too. I'd easily dismiss *mammouth* and *mamelu* which would make *big* redundant."

skosh *noun*, a small amount, a little bit. "This is a well-plotted, economical thriller. . . though the beginning is a *skosh* slow, [the author] picks up the pace" (*Los Angeles Times*).

BACKGROUND: This word, borrowed from the Japanese *te sukoshi*, meaning "a tiny amount," goes back in English at least to the Korean War. *Skosh* (pronounced *skōsh*), has been used by a major clothing manufacturer in its advertising, as indicated by this citation from the 1982 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*: "Levi Strauss, who offers adults a '*skosh* more rock in jeans, is one firm taking a lead at the maturing market." A recent citation from *Red Storm Rising*, by Tom Clancy, attests to a new, prepositional use of *skosh*, the meaning being "without or almost without": "O'Malley didn't have enough fuel to pursue. 'Stand by, Rome, we're coming in *skosh* fuel.'"



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